# An Enlightening Commentary into The Light of the Holy Qur'an

VOLUME I

By

A Group of Muslim Scholars

Imam Ali Library and Research Centre
for Islamic and Scientific Studies
ISFAHAN IRAN

# نور القرآن

في

# تفسير القرآن

تأليف

محمد بن عبد الله بن حامد الأثري

كلمة

# الله

هي العليا

# An Enlightening Commentary into The Light of the Holy Qur'an

## VOLUME 1

By
A Group of Muslim Scholars

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In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

# INTRODUCTION

*"Verily this Qur'an doth guide to that which is most right (or stable) (to run societies), and giveth the glad tidings to the Believers who work deeds of righteousness, that they shall have a magnificent reward"* (Sura Banī Isra'īl, No. 17, verse 9).

*"We have sent down to thee the book explaining all things, a Guide, a Mercy, and Glad tidings to Muslims,* (Sura Nahl, No. 16, verse 89).

*"When those come to thee who believe in Our Signs, say: 'Peace be on you: Your Lord hath inscribed for Himself (the rule of) Mercy; verily, if any of you did evil in ignorance, and thereafter repented, and amended (his conduct), Lo! He is oft-forgiving, Most Merciful",* (Sura An'ām, No. 6, verse 54).

In this century of research and scientific progression of the computer and endeavours for the conquest of space and finding new stars and galaxies, of even more than 50 million light years from us by modern instruments, and the efforts of astronomers and the faster means of communication have set in motion such rapid conveyances for men and material which were far beyond the imagination of the former generations of the human race and which causes a vital change and exchange of thoughts and religious ideology, the light of Islam is penetrating all curtains of every kind and is illuminating some individuals' hearts in nearly all parts of the world, inspite of heavy barriers and careful controls and religious interrogation exerted by not only many governments of non-Muslim nations, but also in some Muslim countries against their believing people, especially during the years after the Islamic Revolution of Iran.

The effective influence of the light of the truth together with the speed in the movement of the Age has brought forth a more vital change and exchange of thought and religious ideology in connection with the Holy Qur'an. In regard to this, we refer to what the Messenger of Allah (p.b.u.h.) has said about it: *"...When afflictions surround you like the dark night refer to the Qur'an, because, it is an Intercessor whose intercession is accepted. It reports the evils (of people) which will be confirmed. It leads the person to Heaven who puts it in front of himself (follows it); and he who puts it*

*behind himself (neglects it) will be driven to Hell. This very Qur'an is the best guide to the best ways. It is a Book in which there are useful explanations, statements and gaining (of goals). It is the Separator (of right and wrong)...", (Usul-i-Kāfī, vol. 2, p. 599.).*

Obviously, those people whose language is not Arabic, at first, refer to the Holy Book in English, because this is an international language and it is possible for all nations with any native language, to read and understand it in English. As far as we know, there are more than 50 different English translations of Qur'an available in Iran, alone, and, probably there can be found some others, besides them, in libraries (and homes) throughout the world. This makes it easy for the lovers of truth to get the knowledge of the Holy Qur'an and Islamic ideology, through the medium of English, which formerly was acquired directly by the Arabic and Persian languages.

But, a fact should be mentioned here that not all of the words of *Allah* are easily understood by ordinary people and need explanatory commentary, *'Tafsīr'*. Alongside this path, there are some problems that those eager to learn the Qur'anic truth should know and be careful of. Hence, we deal, here, with some of the difficulties we were involved in and recognized when we were preparing this endeavour; the fruit of our humble labour of more than three years, almost a pioneer service of its kind, a translation of the commentary of over one section (of the 30 sections) of the Holy Qur'an from different commentary sources.

The work is based especially upon popular commentaries accepted by Muslim scholars, with the consultation of some other books and present living scholars, learned in the Qur'anic Sciences, as our investigative sources on the path of producing this commentary in a simple standard of English easily understood by laymen. The style of writing, here, is a mixture of British-English and American-English undertandable for all the readers even for those acquainted with only one of them; but excuse us for using interchangable spellings. If both are used, from time to time, they are acceptable; i.e.: **honour** and **honor.**

## Not All English Versions of Qur'an Are Acceptable.

Some of the Western translators of the Holy Qur'an; not all of them, and some of the producers of the literature on Islam in the English language are the anti-Muslim elements which are busy distorting the facts about the faith to create disruption in the Islamic ideology.

These hostile minds have done the worst possible work which is for them to black-list the holy Prophet (p.b.u.h.) and the religion of Islam, through their purposeful, subtle, mis-translations, mis-interpretations, mis-representations and distortion of the facts. The distortion and the misinterpretations are so strongly plastered with such attractive colors of the linguistic excellence and the delusive logic that the blind lovers of the English language, who are hardly or even totally unaware of the actual Qur'anic factors of their faith, get caught in the falsehood tempered with the eloquence and they swallow the **'sugar-coated poisonous pills of deceit'** and get themselves duly conditioned to serve the purpose of the publications of the hostile camps.

The current standing of Evil has always been against the Truth in the history of man, of course, or even before the history, from when the sons of Adam came into existence.

When these antagonistic elements have sucessfully extended their active influence upon our own religion, ideology and social tradition, we are also bound in our duty to *Allah*, His Final Word, the Holy Qur'an, the Faith, and to Islam, to do our best, at least, to present to every sincere seeker of it a selection of the proper translation of the verses of the Holy Qur'an from among the best translations appropriate to the meaning of the original Arabic text, and the '***Tafsīr***', commentary, applied in this book.

By the way, we believe that it is the essential belief of ' **Shi'a** ' that the present Qur'an, that which is in our hands today, is the Holy Book of *Allah*, revealed to the holy Prophet Mohammad (p.b.u.h.), as arranged and compiled during his lifetime and read out to him and it contains nothing less or more than what was revealed. And it should be noted that, ***"Nay, but it is a Glorious Qur'an, (inscribed) in a tablet preserved." (85:21,22),*** whose present arrangement is the order in which the various verses were assorted and arranged at the command of the holy Prophet (p.b.u.h.), himself. This is the uncorrupted or undisturbed Word of *Allah*, the preservation of which has been guaranteed by *Allah*, Himself: ***"We have, without doubt, sent down the Message; and We will assuredly guard it (from corruption)", (15:9).***

Furthermore, the English translations next to the Arabic text of the verses, in this book, are elected from different translations of English versions of the Holy Qur'an, (whose names are listed at the end of the book under the title of **'References'**) which are from the best available

sources in which some better styles and more proper meanings are employed. The translator and editor did their best to preserve this divine message and, in conveying the Qur'anic facts in English, there has been some divine assistance bestowed (by *Allah*) through seeking help from the Messenger of Allah, the holy Prophet of Islam (p.b.u.h.), who brought this message to light.

The translator of the current commentary, this writer, believes that the Word of *Allah*, the Holy Qur'an, which is one of the two weights 'ثقلين', is too magnificent for him to translate, because of the fear of *Allah*, and he needed a kind of permission from Him to change the original text from Arabic into another language: ***"Verily this is a revelation from the Lord of the Worlds"*** , ***"In the perspicuous Arabic tongue", (26:192, 195).***

In a few instances this writer changed a word of those existing translations into a better one, with sufficient evidences, of course, and where a link or a conjuction was needed in the cases that the English translation of the first part of a verse was elected from one translator and the rest of the verse from another one to join them together, existing material was employed in this work.

## What is a 'Commentary'?

A pure, correct, accurate translation of the Qur'an is necessary, but it is not sometimes enough for the readers of it to understand all of the apparent and hidden meanings that it bears, and, it is the duty of every Muslim, man or woman, to read, understand and contemplate on the Holy Qur'an according to his own capacity: ***"...read you, therefore, of the Qur'an as much as may be easy for you..." (73:20)***. This reading has to be done not only with the tongue, voice and eyes; a mere recitation, but with the best light that our intellect can supply, and even more, with the truest and purest light which our heart and conscience give us. But, it is not always possible to understand the Holy Book by itself, fully, as *Allah* says: ***"That is indeed a Qur'an most honourable," "Which none shall touch but those who are purified" (56:77, 79).***

Thus, some additional information is needed. For example, it is sometimes necessary for the understanding of the text to refer to the particular occasion for the revelation of a particular verse; or to know the phililogical changes of a word used at the time of revelation or before it and the meaning that it has in Arabic, today. Or the alphabetical symbols which evidently and undoubtedly are secrets, and

especially the ambiguous / mutašābihāt / ; the knowledge of which has been announced to be with the / rāsixūna fil 'ilm / ; those deeply established in knowledge, with even the names of the hinted custodians of the knowledge to remain concealed. They are some things that only 'the particular ones, the sinless ones', besides the Prophet (p.b.u.h.), himself, the agency or the source authorized by *Allah* and the Holy Prophet (p.b.u.h.) viz, ***Ahlul-Bait*** who were connected to the knowledge of *Allah*, (as He says: ***"And whom We had taught knowledge from Our own Presence" (18:65),*** ) knew with all the Qur'anic facts and talked about them in their traditions and narrations.

For instance, the Apostle, himself, answered the questions which used to be asked by people as to the meaning of certain words in the verses revealed, or details of certain historical or spiritual matters on which they sought more enlightenment. These answers and explanations, or, in other words, the commentaries were gathered by some Companions / aṣḥāb / and were afterward written down which are called ' ***Hadīth*** ' or 'traditions' . Of course, the holy Prophet (p.b.u.h.) had openly declared in Hadīth-uth-Thaqalayn that the Qur'an is with the ***Ahlul-Bait***, and to avoid going astray, the Muslims should be attached to these two. Later, Ahlul-Bait's explanations and narrations, concerned with the matter, were added to them and, together with the effect of experts of religious scholars in the past and present, brought up ' ***Exegesis*** ' (explanation of Qur'an) which became a science by itself and was called '***Tafsīr***' , commentary.

'Commentary' shows how every verse, or group of verses, were revealed to the holy Prophet (p.b.u.h.) for a particular occasion which has also a general meaning. The particular occasion and the particular people concerned have passed away, but the general meaning and its application remain true for all time, to enlighten the world, thoroughly. This is also one of the miracles of the Qur'an that with the help of 'commentary' it is always open and it is always new for those new generations to come.

## The Current Commentary

As was mentioned earlier, the light of Islam is enlightening the corners everywhere in the world and seekers of truth, having referred to the translations of the Holy Qur'an, find that they need '***Tafsīr***', (commentary).

Some of them, the Shi'a believers in particular, have been led to this Center; Amir-al-Mo'mineen Ali (a.s.) Library, which received many letters requesting a clear, concise English Tafsīr, 'a commentary of the Holy Qur'an'.

From the beginning of Islam until today (although many times the Holy Qur'an has been translated into English and a few of them are published with brief, detailed commentary, as footnotes, there has rarely been, as far as we know, a fairly complete commentary in English sufficient for them to find their answers. So, the decision was made to supply this commentary.

Ayatullah Mujāhed Alhājj 'Allamah Saiyed Kamāl Faqhīh Īmānī, the founder and responsible party of this Islamic Scientific Research Center, approached us and reported the situation to scholars and appropriate research societies. Then, 12 people, who had varying nationalities and educational backgrounds, especially from the point of English language and Islamic Theology, gathered. In their first gathering which was held on 28th Safar, 1412 (1370 H. and 1991), they concluded that the commentary of the whole Qur'an which they intended to supply in English, would take many years of time for the translators to produce.

In order to quench the thirst of the lovers of Truth who had demanded it again and again, they decided to supply the commentary of the last section of the Qur'an as a sample and after its publication and receiving the constructive comments of the readers and, then, with a better skillfulness in the writer or writers, the translation of the commentary would begin from the beginning of the Holy Qur'an.

Therefore, they thought it would be better that the sample, entitled **'An Enlightening Commentary Into the Light of the Holy Qur'an'**, begin with Sura Insān, the end of the 29th Section, because the Qur'an was revealed for the improvement of Man and this Sura is about Man and his creation from a lowly life-germ which can develop unto the highest point where no other creature can ascend.

But, after several weeks the number of us dwindled to a handful and after some months, until the present, we remain two people; the translator and the editor. During this period of more than three years, a few people have tried their hands at this task to have a share in the translation, but, for different reasons, they were not successful. However, we are completely grateful for their efforts and extend our thanks for their attempts as well as to those who had any involvement in this work.

## Attributes Needed for Working on This Kind of Commentary

This endeavour needed not only the knowledge and skillfulness in the English language, but also the knowledge of Arabic, and Islamic science and culture, because Tafsīr is an attempt to analize and explain the meaning of verses in the Holy Qur'an. Moreover, *Allah*, Himself, says: ***"We have sent down to thee the book explaining all things, a Guide, a Mercy, and Glad Tidings to Muslims", (Sura Nahl, No. 16, verse 89).***

Then, it needs that those involved know a little bit, at least, about almost all sciences and knowledge that human beings are concerned with when working with the commentary. Also, the phonetic sound systems of the two languages, English and Arabic, are different. Therefore, when an Arabic word from the Qur'an is mentioned in the English text, it is shown with the phonetic alphabet and in its special phonetical sign, i.e.: / / to avoid using 'Arabic script' in the book, as far as possible.

A transliteration table of the Arabic letters and sounds and the corresponding phonetic signs, applied in this book, is given at the beginning of the book, (p. xxii).

## The Problems in Translating

We tried to avoid mixing up our own personal theories and conclusions with the interpretation of the text, itself, which is usually perfectly perspicuous as it claims to be. With the help of *Allah*, we did our best; at times asking for guidance from some learned clergymen, and used all the knowledge and experience we possessed in the service of the Holy Qur'an for its commentary, hoping that *Allah* accepts it, but the nature of this sort of endeavour is so that, in the course of translation, some difficulties arise from various causes. For instance, cultures in the Arabic language and English language are different so that some of the words like / **amrun bayn al amrayn** / in the case of fatalism and freewill are nearly impossible to translate into English, because the concept is not found in English literature; or the meaning of some words like '**prostration**', in English, is rather different with what / **sajdah** / exactly means in Arabic. In such cases we selected the meaning of the words from among what the earlier commentators and philologists used and, also, where they were not unanimous, we used the ideas of the new writers who had reasonable advantages in their interpretations when the senses adopted with the commentary sources

that we were taking and translating materials from. Explanations, of course, are always helpful, which we took benefit from, too.

It is noteworthy that there are some circumstances in the text, of the commentary, in which a verse or verses of Qur'an from other Suras rather than the Sura under discussion are mentioned as evidence or, thereby, for strengthening the idea. The text of these verses and, also, the traditions and narrations from the holy Prophet or Ahlul-Bait (p.b.u.th.) is printed in English in bolder type than the running commentary in order to distinguish, at a glance, the substance from the shadow. Also, the mentioned verses are generally taken from A. Yusuf Ali's translation.

## It Was Only By His Merciful Will

### Translator's Note:

Both the editor and the translator have interesting factual stories to tell of how the way of this endeavour was paved by Providence and how they were divinely led to be absorbed into this task, Alhamdulillah. A few words given here, in this regard, are not to be misunderstood as a display of vanity for any pecular distinction; for there is none.

It is purely to attract the attention of the readers to a living instance of the Providential implementation of the divine plan and how man drifts to his assignment and how matters are automatically manipulated, though, they seem yet only to be circumstantial. ***"He said: Our Lord is He Who gave to each (created) thing its form and nature and further gave (it) guidance" (20:50)*** .

For example, once, on a night, the writer of these lines, the translator, had seen in a dream that the Holy Qur'an, was placed, honourably, on a high position, wide open, high above a very great crowd of people amongst whom he was standing, watching. The full name of his was clearly written in the midst of the writings on the right page of it with magnificent bold letters.

The dream was obviously a good one, but it did not mean vividly to him at that time.

It was four years before he found out, in the course of translating the commentary of ***verses 11-16*** from ***Sura 'Abasa No. 80***, both the meaning of that dream and the cause of later changes in his career of twenty years, as a manager of a profitable Foreign Language Center, thanks to *Allah*. It is always true what the Qur'an says: ***"You will not unless Allah wills, surely Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise" (76:30)*** .

By His graceful arrangement this writer was separated from his almost material gains, of this fleeting world, to be set toward the assured, perfect, pure, spiritual rewards of the next, everlasting world from Him, *Allah* willing, when he began translating the commentary of the Qur'an and entered this great Divine Ocean of light, he found out that from earlier times such a success had been appointed and bestowed to him by *Allah*. Therefore, all changes and graceful arrangements directly are from Him and it was His helpful Will that planned His graceful design and showered the ability and insight upon us to lead us to the present point. We are eagerly in hopes that He will help us and guide us in all cases to complete the task successfully so that He accepts it from us.

❁ ❁ ❁ ❁

**Editor's Note:**

In my case, it is a fact that only by the grace of *Allah* have I come to be at the helm working, side-by-side with the translator, on this commentary of the Holy Qur'an. Editing and checking this translation of **' An Enlightening Commentary into the Light of the Holy Qur'an '** has been a most important and rewarding experience for me.

To be of value in this work several things were necessary; my mother tongue, English, was almost at the top of the list. Then, having the ability to use a computer and printer, which involved me having to learn and use a Farsi program named ***Zarnegar***, produced in Tehran, Iran, I was able to make use of the wonderful array of fonts it contains; necessary to type the Arabic and English languages. Next, living in Iran, for four years, has made it possible for me to become acquainted with the native language and customs. However, the greatest asset, of all, is that I am a Shi'a Muslim woman.

It is fifteen (15) years ago, now, that, in America, I became ***enlightened*** to the existence of the Holy Qur'an and accepted it as a better way of life. Over this period of time it has put me in touch with the purity of the religion and the logical answers to the religious questions I had as a Catholic.

My father told us, as children, that if we ever wanted to know anything we should go to the source and to always have the correct tools, on hand, to do the job right.

When I started hearing and seeing, on television, the upheaval of the Islamic Revolution, in Iran, and the speech of a brave and courageous man they called *Ayatollah Khomeini*, I became very intense on knowing why it was happening and in knowing who this man was who had been exiled and was making his return to his homeland. ***"Our Lord! We have heard the call of one calling (us) to faith, 'Believe ye in the Lord,' and we have believed. Our Lord! Forgive us our sins, blot out from us our iniquities, and take to Thyself our souls in the company of the righteous" (H.Q. 3:193).***

It was something more spectacular than I had ever read about in my high school history books. There was a charge in it that I could not explain, and up until that time, I had never really heard anything about Islam, Prophet Mohammad or Muslims, for that matter.

I bought *A. Yusef Ali's English Translation of the Holy Qur'an*, basing my decision on my father's counsel and I began from page one.

It was talking about the same things I had already learned; Adam and Eve in the Garden, disobeyed God due to the wiles of Satan and, then, were expelled to Earth; Moses is given the scripture and leads his people out of Egypt, but they forfeited their covenant for a golden calf; Abraham, Ismail and Issac of the religion true, and there, Mary. Hail Mary! Chaste, pure, chosen above other women, given glad tidings of a Word from Him; his name will be Christ Jesus, son of Mary, held in honor...(*H.Q. 3:42-45*).

And it went on: Practice charity, take care of the orphans, speak a speech that is just, beware of the deceits of the Unbelievers...I was in awe as I neared the end. No place was any obscenity found - no trace of ugliness which I found in the Bible - nothing but ***pure*** scripture; a complete religion, the one and only continuing from the first of Abraham. So, it became crystal clear, to me, that Islam is the final, refined message from God.

True, just, undeniable, containing what I had always felt and that is this: There is only One God; unique, needing no partner, powerful, and yet merciful and kind. How could God be more than one; Creator of such a vast universe and more?

With this understanding, though, came many tests to my new-found-faith; albeit necessary tests. Did I really believe - did I really submit to His Will - was I really worthy?

I began by only putting on a scarf, covering all of my hair. ***"And say to the believing women...that they should draw their veils over their bosoms and not display their beauty except to their husbands, their fathers..." (H.Q. 24:31).***

Immediately the responses that I encountered proved the rightness of it all. I was chided, spit at, hit and cursed. Well, of course, a great deal of this was due to the propaganda which caused mass hysteria against Iran and not having their facts straight about the religion of Islam, however, it hurt just the same, but I had learned forgiveness and perseverance from my mother.

It was difficult for my family in the beginning; this change I was making, however, we are very close at heart, today, due to my faith and reliance on *Allah*. ***"And out of kindness, lower to them the wing of humility, and say: 'My Lord! Bestow on them Thy Mercy even as they cherished me in childhood.' " (H.Q. 17:24).***

Almost at once the veils over my understanding fell away and I started rejecting a lot of the 'big-business' propaganda that had infiltrated into my life. ***"Let there be no compulsion in religion: Truth stands out clear from error; whosoever rejects Evil and believes in God hath grasped the most trustworthy hand-hold, that never breaks..." (H.Q. 2:256).***

The '***Big Sell***' eats away at the very fabric of human society to the point that life has only a superficial meaning and high value is put on every inanimate object which man can produce. ***"The life of this world is alluring to those who reject faith, and they scoff at those who believe. But the righteous will be above them on the Day of Resurrection; for God bestows His abundance on whom He will " (H.Q. 2:212).***

I had developed an intense desire to go to Iran--the country of martyrs; having an air so thick with emotions, direction and goal, at that time, and having the presence of an undeniable strength caressing it in the hands of an unseen power.

Ten years after I started practicing the tenets of Islam the opportunity presented itself for me to be able to fullfil my desire. ***"Not equal are those Believers who sit (at home) and receive no hurt, and those who strive and fight in the cause...God has granted a grade higher to those who strive...(H.Q. 4:95).***

I wished very much to become involved in some type of work regarding the Holy Qur'an and in due time I was approached to work with a group of people on a commentary of the Holy Qur'an. ***"And for those who fear God, He prepares a way out" "And He provides for him from (sources) he never could imagine..." (H.Q. 65:2-3).***

Those of you who know anything about the rigors of editing know that it is very time-comsuming and attention to detail is very necessary.

Spending many hours discussing the meaning of a single word, or phrase, can cause the ordinary soul to become frustrated, but that frustration is ultimately quelled when peace and tranquility cover the heart at the point where there is that final agreement and gives those involved renewed enthusiasm to continue.

Sometimes you will notice more spacing than usual on a line or within the phonetic brackets (/ /), but this is due to the fact that the Zarnegar program is a Farsi program and it took much time trying to place the little phonetic line over, or the little dot under, the correct letter, because English is written from left to right and Farsi is written from right to left, so, I had a bit of anarchy on my hands for a time.

I leave you, now, in the hopes that you, too, will be provoked to question and seek. (Seek and you will find). Looking back, I feel that *Allah* does consider me worthy. ***"God is the protector of those who have faith; from the depths of darkness He will lead them into light " (H.Q. 2:257).***

Wa Salam

# Transliteration of Arabic Letters

| Long Vowels | | Short Vowels | | Diphthongs | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| آ ا | ā | ـَ | a | اَی | aī |
| و | ū | ـُ | u | اَو | aū |
| ی | ī | ـِ | i | | |

## Letters

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| ب | b | ط | ṭ |
| ت | t | ظ | ẓ |
| ث | θ | ع | ʿ |
| ج | j | غ | ġ |
| ح | ḥ | ف | f |
| خ | x | ق | q |
| د | d | ک | k |
| ذ | ð | ل | l |
| ر | r | م | m |
| ز | z | ن | n |
| س | s | و | w, ū, aū |
| ش | š | ه | h |
| ص | ṣ | ی | y |
| ض | ḍ | ة | ah, at |

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْم

اُدْعُ إِلَىٰ سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحِكْمَةِ وَ الْمَوْ عِظَةِ

الْحَسَنَةِ وَ جَدِلْهُم بِالَّتِى هِىَ أَحْسَنُ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ

هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَن ضَلَّ عَن سَبِيلِهِ وَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ

بِالْمُهْتَدِين

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**In The Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful**

Invite (all) to the Way of your Lord with wisdom and beautiful exhortation; and debate with them in a way which is the best; surely your Lord knows best who have strayed from His path and knows best who are (rightly) guided.

**[ Sura Nahl (The Bee), No. 16, verse 125. ]**

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمْ

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

In The Name Of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

# Sura INSAN (Human)

## *No. 76 (31 Verses)*

(The Arabic meaning of 'Insan' is 'Human'. In the English language the words 'Mankind' and 'Man' are also used for 'Human' and we have used 'Man' in the text.)

### *Contents of the Sura:*

In spite of its brevity, this Sura presents a deep, varied and comprehensive theme which can be divided into five sections:

1. Man's creation from a drop of mingled sperm; his guidance and his free-will.
2. The reward offered to the Righteous /abrār/. (This part has a special occasion for its revelation in relation to the household of the Prophet *(p.b.u.h.)*, ie. Ahlul-Bait; which will be discussed at a later point.)
3. The merits which cause one to deserve the rewards.
4. The importance of The Qur'an, the manner of conducting its principles and the demanding road of self-perfection.
5. The dominance of *Allah's* Will (even though man has limited free-will).

There are different titles for this Sura. The most famous are "MAN" *(Insan )*, "TIME" *(Dahr)* and "HAS THERE COME" *(Hal-atā)*; each of which is taken from one of the words at the beginning of the Sura; however, in the traditions we will discuss, here, about the virtue of the Sura, only **Hal-atā** is mentioned.

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### *Was the Sura revealed in Medina?*

The consensus of scholars and commentators is that all or at least part of the beginning verses, which explain the position or dignity of the Righteous and their good deeds, were revealed in Medina. The occasion of revelation about them, that is, the story of Ali, Fatima, Hassan, Hosain *(p.b.u.th.)* and Fezza (their house-helper); and their vows, will be explained in detail at the appropriate time.

From among the famous scholars, we can mention Qartabī, the

well-known commentator who points out: "***The consensus of scholars believe that the Sura has been revealed in Medina.***"[1]

In addition to this, we can also mention the following:

1. ***Hākim Ab-al-Qāsim Haskāni*** has, in detail, quoted from Ibn-Abbās the number of verses, which were separately revealed in Mecca and Medina. He has considered it as a Medinan Sura which has been revealed after **Sura Al-Rahmān** and before **Sura Al-Talāq**.[2] Prof. Ahmad Zahid, the writer of '***Idah***', has also quoted the same from Ibn-Abbās.[3]

2. Abu 'Abdullah Zanjāni, in his book, ***Tārikh-i-Qur'an*** (The history of the Qur'an) has quoted from '***Nazm-ad- Dorar wa Tanāsiq-al-Āyāt-i wa'l-Sowar***' that a group of scholars have considered this Sura among the Medinan ones.[4]

3. From the same source, (***Tārikh-i-Qur'an***, quoting from ***Fihrist-i- Ibn Nadim***) is quoted from Ibn-Abbās that this Sura is considered the eleventh Medinan Sura.[5]

4. Suyuti, in his book '***Itqān***' has quoted from ***Dalāyl-al-Nabowwa*** by Beyhaqi, who has in turn quoted from 'Akrama that: "**Sura Insān** ***was revealed in Medina***".[6]

5. In ***Durr al-Manthūr***, the same comment from Ibn-Abbās is quoted in different forms.[7]

6. ***Tafsīr-i Kashshāf***, a commentary, is where Zamakhshari has pointed out that the occasion of revelation, in the beginning verses, was about the vows taken by Ali, Fatima, Hassan and Hosain ***(p.b.u.th.)***.[8]

7. There are still many other scholars, besides the aforementioned ones, who say that the beginning verses are about Ali, Fatima, Hassan and Hosain ***(p.b.u.th.)***.[9]

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1 Tafsir-i-Qartabi, vol. 10, p. 6909.

2 Majma'-al-Bayān, vol. 10, p. 405.

3 Ibid.

4 Tārikh-i-Qur'an, p. 55.

5 Ibid.

6 Al-Mizān, vol. 20, p. 221.

7 Ibid.

8 Kashshāf, vol. 4, p. 670.

9 Ihqāq-al-Haqq, vol. 3, p. 157-170.

This verifies that the Sura has been revealed in Medina (since we know that Hassan and Hosain *(p.b.u.th.)* were born in Medina). Among these scholars' books we can mention the master Vāḥidi's 'Asbāb al-Nozūl', Baqavī's 'Ma' alim-at-Tanzīl', Sebt Ibn-Jouzi's "Tathkirah", Ganji Shāfi'i's 'Kifāyat-at-Tālib' and so on. This verification is so reputable and well known that Mohammad Ibn-Idrīs Shāfi'ī has referred to it in his poem:

"How long, how long, up until when,
Will you reproach me my love
For this gentle man?
Was not Fatima married but only to him?
And was not Hal-atā revealed
About only but him?"

There are many other evidences supporting these views, some of which, will be pointed out later, when the occasion of revelation of the verses is discussed.

In spite of these facts, some enthusiasts still insist on counting the Sura among Meccan ones and reject all the narrations about the revelation of the Sura being revealed in Medina as well as the revelation of this Sura being about Ali, Fatima, Hassan and Hosain *(p.b.u.th.)*.

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### *The Virtue in Studying* Sura Insān (Man):

There is a tradition from the Prophet(*p.b.u.h.*) that says: "*One who studies* **Sura Hal-atā** *will be rewarded Heaven and clothes of silk (in Heaven) by Allah.*"[1]

There is also a narration from Imam Bāqir *(p.b.u.h.)* which says: "*One of the rewards for a person who studies* **Sura Hal-atā** *every Thursday morning is that he will be with the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) on the Day of Judgement.*"[2]

1 Majma'-al-Bayān, vol. 10, p. 402.

2 Ibid.

# Sura Insan (Man)

*No. 76 (verses 1-4)*

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

١ هَلْ اَتٰى عَلَى الْاِنْسَانِ حِيْنٌ مِنَ الدَّهْرِ لَمْ يَكُنْ شَيْئًا مَّذْكُوْرًا ○

٢ اِنَّا خَلَقْنَا الْاِنْسَانَ مِنْ نُّطْفَةٍ اَمْشَاجٍ نَّبْتَلِيْهِ فَجَعَلْنٰهُ سَمِيْعًا بَصِيْرًا ○

٣ اِنَّا هَدَيْنٰهُ السَّبِيْلَ اِمَّا شَاكِرًا وَّاِمَّا كَفُوْرًا ○

٤ اِنَّا اَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكٰفِرِيْنَ سَلٰسِلَ وَاَغْلٰلًا وَّسَعِيْرًا ○

**In The Name Of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful**

1. *Has there not been over Man a long period of Time when he was a thing not worth mentioning?*
2. *Surely We created Man from a drop of mingled semen, in order to try him: so We gave him hearing and sight.*
3. *Surely We showed him the Way: whether he be grateful or ungrateful (is up to him).*
4. *We have prepared Chains, Yokes and a Blazing Fire for the Rejectors.*

**Commentary:**

***We transformed the lowly mixture of sperm (and egg) into Man, then We made all the faculties of guidance available to him.***

Though most of the details in this Sura are about Resurrection and the Blessings of Heaven, there is, at the beginning of the Sura, some discussion on the creation of *Man*. It becomes understood that if one takes note of the creation then one may be able to act cautiously in anticipation of the Resurrection.

The question is asked, "***Has there not been over Man a long period of Time when he was a thing not worth mentioning?***" The answer, undoubtedly, is in the affirmative.

For a long time the tiny essential particles of his being were

scattered in different places. They could have been in the soil, among the tiny droplets of water in the seas, or in the atmosphere. In fact, each of these three environments was so vast that the particles were lost within them and were so small as not to be worthy of mention.

Does the term ***'Man'***, in the first verse, refer to all the members of mankind or does it only refer to ***Adam***? The next verse continues: "***Surely we created Man from a drop of mingled semen...***" so, we can say this is a clear indication that it is referring to all of mankind; {since it is a known fact that this is definitely how Man reproduces, and not by any other means. It is not a condition of coming into existence only for Adam.}

However, some commentators believe that the term ***'Man'***, in the first verse, refers to ***'Adam'*** and that ***'Man'***, in the second verse, indicates ***'mankind'*** as a whole. However, this seems to be a contradiction in thought and does not appear to be probable.

In the following sentence, "***...he was considered a thing not worth mentioning?***", there are various ideas put forth on this issue and one of them is that when ***Man*** was but mingled sperm (and egg), he was not worthy of mention, however, later when the entity possessed the higher stage of development it became a worthy being.

[It has been narrated from Imam Bāqir ***(p.b.u.h.)***, the fifth Imam, that ***Man's*** existence was known to *Allah*, even though he was not mentioned as being a worthy entity until *Allah* created him in the physical form.][1]

Other interpretations indicate that the term ***'Man'***, in this verse, means ***'learned people'*** who were not recognized at first, but subsequently became so, after having obtained their knowledge. They were, then, mentioned everywhere, among all people, while they were alive and even after their death.

Now, we come to the process of the second stage which is the creation of ***Man*** and his becoming worthy of mention. The verse says, "***Surely We created Man from a drop of mingled semen, in order to try him: so We gave him hearing and sight.***"

The term /amšāj/ is the plural form of /mašaj/ or /mašīj/ which means ***'mingled'*** or ***'mixed'***. The creating of ***Man*** from ***'mingled semen'*** probably refers to the mixture of sperm and egg and their unification, or

1 Majma'-al-Bayān, vol. 10, p. 406.

it could refer to the various talents possessed by man through heritage; which exists in the genes, DNA, and Chromosomes that are in every sperm and egg. Or, perhaps it refers to a combination of all of the aforementioned cases. If so, the last idea is the most complete and suitable.

It may be possible that the term *'mingled'* refers to the process of development, upon unification of sperm and egg; which leads the mixture to develop into a foetus and then into ***Man***. With the term /nabtalīh/, *"We try him..."*, we can understand that ***Man*** deserves the honor of duty, undertaking, responsibility, examination and trial, which is one of the greatest divine blessings *Allah* has gifted to ***Man***.

Since duty and examination are not possible unless there is awareness; hence, hearing and sight are given to ***Man***. This fact is mentioned at the end of the verse; making it clear for us that the former cannot exist without the latter.

Some commentators have also suggested that the intention for the examination is the process of developing the sperm to foetus and, then, to a complete ***Man***. However, upon careful examination of the phrase *"We try him..."* and *"Man"*, the first interpretation seems more suitable.

By accepting this definition, we can understand that the origin in all of the conception of *'Man'* is in his sensational understanding. In other words, sensational understanding is the basis of all rationalities. Most Islamic philosophers support this idea and Aristotle, the famous Greek philosopher, approved of the idea, as well.

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Since, in the duty and examination of ***Man***, two more factors are required, that is, *'guidance'* and *'free-will'* are added to understanding; the next verse insists, then, that ***"Surely We guided him to the Way: whether he be grateful or ungrateful (is up to him)."***

Guidance, it can be said, has a broad meaning containing the following three branches: ***divine guidance***, ***natural guidance*** and ***religious guidance***. This verse, of course, mostly intends to convey the third branch, i.e. *'religious guidance'*.

***Explanation:***

Since *Allah* has created ***Man*** with a special goal in mind: ***'examination and development'***, *He* has prepared the necessary faculties for these fulfilments in his being. This can be considered ***'divine guidance'***.

Thereupon, *He* has made ***Man*** naturally eager to follow the Way and with the help of his natural inclinations, has shown him its direction. This can be considered ***'natural guidance'***.

Further, *He* has given a mission to some heavenly leaders and great prophets in order for them to train ***Man***, show him the right direction and teach him the clear religious laws; so that he may perform his duty correctly. This can be considered ***'religious guidance'***. These three kinds of guidance, of course, are for all members of mankind; without any exception.

On the whole, this verse indicates three points which are important for the destiny in the life of ***Man***: ***'duty'***, ***'guidance'*** and ***'free-will'***; all of which are both interdependent and complementary to each other. By the way, there will be no room for the case of fatalism to exist when it says: ***"Surely We guided him to the Way: whether he be grateful or ungrateful (is up to him)"***.

The terms /šākiran/ ***'grateful'*** and /kafūran/ ***'ungrateful'*** are the most fitting, here, because those who obey *Allah* and assume to follow *His* guidance are thankful, but those who disobey and do not follow the direction are sinners gone astray.

No one can be completely thankful for *Allah's* blessings, but those who repay this favor with ingratitude are the worst. They have neither appreciation for *Allah's* guidance nor the many ways that *He* has provided this guidance; which are always available. (In Arabic, there is only one term used for those who are ***'ungrateful'*** and for the ***'unbelievers'***: /kafūr/. The same is noted in Mufradāt by Rāqib).

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In the next verse, there is a short, but meaningful point that relates to the fate of those who are ungrateful; it says: ***"We have prepared Chains, Yokes and a Blazing Fire for the Rejecters"***.

The sense derived from the term /a'tadnā/, ***"We have***

***prepared...*** " is an emphasis on the existence of punishment; which is unavoidable for the rejecters. We know that preparation is for common people who are limited in their abilities and must make prior arrangements for their supplies, so that when they are in need they are sure that they will have everything ready. This is not true when speaking of *Allah*, because whenever *He* Wills something to "***Be***", it will be done at once and preparation is meaningless. However, to show the certainty of the existence of punishment for the rejecters, *He* insists that there is a means for the punishment; it is ready-made and there is no doubt about it.

Further along in the sentence, we see that /salāsil/ ***'chains'*** is the plural form of /silsilah/ which, here, means: 1.) A flexible series of jointed links or rings usually of some kind of metal. 2.) That which binds, as a prisoner held in chains. The term /aqlāl/ ***'yokes'*** is the plural form of /qul/ ***'yoke'*** which means: a wooden frame or bar with loops or bows at either end, used for harnessing together a pair of oxen, etc. Here, ***'yoke'***, is a heavy iron ring held on the neck or hands and is fastened with a chain.

On the whole, chains, yokes and blazing fire, which are mentioned in this verse, indicate a great harmful punishment for the rejecters. This sense is also pointed out in several other verses of the Qur'an. They denote both captivity and torture as punishment.

Man's using his free-will for following after his lusts during his lifetime, in this world, will be the reason for that pain in the next life. In fact, that ***'blazing fire'*** that man will encounter later, is the incarnation of the fire he, himself, has made by his evil deeds in this world.

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***Explanation:***

### *THE FOETUS AND ITS DEVELOPMENT*

We know that the human zygote is an entity formed by the unification of the male sperm and the female egg.

The sperm, itself, its combination with the egg and the different steps of fetal development into ***Man*** is a great marvel in human existence. Some of the mysteries have been uncovered in the study of embryology, but there are some further areas yet to be discovered. A few of the above mentioned wonders are as follows:

1. ***Sperm:*** Floating in the semen of men is a very microscopic creature that has a head, neck and moving tail. (And what a miracle it is!: The tail propels it through the inhospitable environment, inside the vagina, on its journey to fertilize the egg. The environment of the vagina is very acidic and there are only a certain number of days in a month in which the platens are vertical, in the female secretions, so that the spermatozoa can travel the distance without hindrance. At other times the platens are in a hodge-podge array and this makes it virtually impossible for the sperm to move in a straight line. Also, some of the spermatozoa may be deformed and unable, themselves, to make the journey.)

Every time a man has an ejaculation, he discharges, in the seminal fluid, an average of 70 million sperm per milliliter or 100 million spermatozoa or more--this is equal to the population of several countries, but only one of them, most usually, succeeds in entering the ovum so that fertilization can take place.[1] This number is very large because, as mentioned above, many of the spermatozoa will be destroyed on their long and arduous journey.

2. ***Egg:*** The wonderful characteristic of the egg is that it allows one sperm to enter it. (However, on rare occasions more than one sperm enters resulting in 'identical' twins or more than one egg is released from the ovum sac resulting in 'fraternal' twins). Also, within the egg the miraculous cell division process takes place.

3. ***Uterus:*** The uterus is a muscular organ and serves as a place for reception, retention, and nutrition of the conceptus, which it expels during labor. It resembles a flattened pear in shape and the size varies depending on the age of the female. The remarkable ability of the cervix to dilate results from dissociation of collagen. The blood supply of the uterus is derived principally from the uterine and ovarian arteries.

4. ***Amnionic Fluid:*** The foetus is in a thick, essentially colorless, fluid in a sac called the 'placenta'. This fluid protects the foetus against the

1 Williams Obstetrics, 15th Edition, p. 87.

mother's various quick, sharp movements or any other violent disturbances. Moreover, it regulates the foetal temperature, so that the changes in the outside temperature cannot easily effect it. The most interesting point is that, most generally, the fluid keeps the foetus in a weightless state, which is very efficient and prevents limb stress.

5. ***Placenta and Cord:*** The foetus receives nourishment through the placenta and umbilical cord. The mothers's blood is accompanied by food materials and oxygen that arrives at the placenta and after a refining process goes to the foetus' heart through the umbilical cord and then moves through its body.

6. ***Conception:*** After fertilization, the mature ovum becomes a zygote, which then undergoes segmentation. Some biological scientists believe that the ovum carries positive electric charges and the sperm has negative electric charges, then they attract each other. However, when the sperms enter the ovum, the charge is changed to a negative charge. In so doing, the other sperms in the surrounding area will be repelled. Other scientists maintain that when the sperm enters the egg, some chemicals will be released causing the remaining spermatozoa to move away. Whichever the case may be, in a couple of days the zygote attaches itself to the wall of the uterine cavity. From there, if there are no complications in the growth and development process, a new being will enter this world.

From the beginning of the fourth month, the foetus is capable of respiratory movement sufficiently intense to move amnionic fluid in and out of the respiratory tract.[1] Air-breathing is initiated by the rapid replacement of bronchial and alveolar fluid by air.[2]

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1 Williams Obstetrics, 15th Edition, p. 158.

2 Williams Obstetrics, 15th Edition, p. 385.

# Sura Insan (Man)

*No. 76 (verses 5-11)*

٥ اِنَّ الْاَبْرَارَ يَشْرَبُوْنَ مِنْ كَاْسٍ كَانَ مِزَاجُهَا كَافُوْرًا ○

٦ عَيْنًا يَّشْرَبُ بِهَا عِبَادُ اللّٰهِ يُفَجِّرُوْنَهَا تَفْجِيْرًا ○

٧ يُوْفُوْنَ بِالنَّذْرِ وَيَخَافُوْنَ يَوْمًا كَانَ شَرُّهٗ مُسْتَطِيْرًا ○

٨ وَيُطْعِمُوْنَ الطَّعَامَ عَلٰى حُبِّهٖ مِسْكِيْنًا وَّ يَتِيْمًا وَّ اَسِيْرًا ○

٩ اِنَّمَا نُطْعِمُكُمْ لِوَجْهِ اللّٰهِ لَا نُرِيْدُ مِنْكُمْ جَزَآءً وَّ لَا شُكُوْرًا ○

١٠ اِنَّا نَخَافُ مِنْ رَّبِّنَا يَوْمًا عَبُوْسًا قَمْطَرِيْرًا ○

١١ فَوَقٰىهُمُ اللّٰهُ شَرَّ ذٰلِكَ الْيَوْمِ وَ لَقّٰىهُمْ نَضْرَةً وَّ سُرُوْرًا ○

*5. "Verily, the Righteous drink of a cup; the mixture of which is (like) camphor."*

*6. "A fountain, where the servants of Allah drink, flows in abundance (wherever they wish)."*

*7. "They fulfill (their) vows and fear a Day, the chastisement of which is widespread."*

*8. "And they feed, for the love of Allah, the indigent, the orphan, and the captive."*

*9. (Saying): "We feed you for the sake of Allah alone: no reward do we desire from you, nor thanks."*

*10. "We only fear from our Lord a Day, frowningly severe."*

*11. Therefore, Allah will guard them against the evil of that Day, and will grant over them a Light of Beauty and a (blissful) joy."*

***The Occasion of Revelation:***

***A great evidence for the superiority and excellence of Ahlul-Bait; the household of the Prophet (p.b.u.h.).***

Ibn-Abbās says that Hassan and Hosain *(p.b.u.th.)* were sick. The Prophet *(p.b.u.h.)* and a group of followers came to visit them. They suggested to Hazrat Ali to take a vow for their recovery. So, Ali, Fatima and Fezza (their house-helper) took a vow that if Hassan and Hosain recovered, they would fast for three days. (According to the same narration, Hassan and Hosain *(p.b.u.th.)* made the same vow.)

After a short while both of them recovered. Therefore, the family fasted for the first day, but, as they were in dire need for food stuffs, Hazrat Ali borrowed some barley and Hazrat Fatima ground one-third of it into flour and baked some bread.

With the onset of evening, when they were preparing to break their fasts, an indigent person came to their door and said, "***Peace be upon you, the Household of Mohammad. I am a needy Muslim, so please give me some food. May Allah bestow upon you, in kind, from divine sustenance.***" All of them gave priority to him and gave him their shares. That night, they broke their fast with only water.

The following day they fasted again, but, like the previous day, an orphan came to the door. Once more, they forfeited their bread and ate nothing but water.

The next day, they fasted for the third time. This day a captive came to their house and they repeated their charity.

On the fourth day, Ali took Hassan and Hosain with himself to see the Prophet. When the Prophet observed their condition; they were trembling with hunger, he said, "***It grieves me to see you in this condition.***" Then, he stood up and walked with them. When he arrived at their home, he found Fatima praying. Her stomach was sunk in to her back-bone and her eyes had become sunken, too. The Prophet was greatly affected. At this moment Gabriel descended and said, "***O, Mohammad receive this Sura. Allah congratulates you for having such a family.***" And then Gabriel recited, to him, **Sura Hal-atā**.[1]

1 Al-Qadīr, vol. 3, p. 107-111, Ihqāq-al-Haqq, vol. 3, p. 157-171.

**Commentary:**

***The Great Reward for the Righteous.***

In the aforementioned verses (1-4) human beings were divided into two groups; the grateful and the ungrateful and reference was made to the ***'punishment and penalty'*** for the ungrateful. But, in these verses there is a recount of the ***'Rewards'*** offered to the Righteous.

First, it says, "***Verily, the Righteous drink of a cup; the mixture of which is (like) camphor.***"

The term /abrār/ is the plural form of /barr/, which originally means ***'broadness and expansiveness'***. For this reason, dry land and vast deserts, as opposed to large bodies of water, are called /barr/. Thus, this term is applied to the Righteous (people who do good), because their good deeds have extensive effects on the society.

The word /birr/ means ***'to be pious'***, ***'just'***, or ***'to act justly'***. It is said that making the distinction between /khayr/ and /birr/ is for the reason that the former has a general meaning of goodness while the latter has the specific meaning of ***'goodness accompanied by intention'***.

The term /kāfūr/ has various meanings; one of which is ***'good smelling'***. Another meaning is ***'fragrant plant'*** or a plant which has a sweet fragrance. Also, it has the common meaning of ***'a sharp odour'*** that has medical applications, e.g. for sterilizing or disinfecting. The other meaning has its importance as an extraordinarly white and cool substance, and it is famous, because of its coolness and whiteness.

Furthermore, this verse indicates that this purifying drink is so fragrant that it is enjoyed both through the senses of taste and smell. On the whole, /kāfūr/ has been considered as having the same value as musk and ambegris; the famous sweet fragrances.

Then, it refers to the fountainhead from which this cup of divine drink is filled; and says, "***A fountain, wherefrom the servants of Allah drink, flows in abundance (wherever they wish).***" This purified fountain is under their control in such a way that it flows wherever they wish.

It is worthy of mention that in a tradition from Imam Bāqir ***(p.b.u.h.)*** it is quoted that in a description of the fountain he said that this fountain is placed in the house of the Prophet and from there it flows to the houses of the previous prophets ***(p.b.u.th.)*** and believers.

It is true that, as in this world, the fountains of knowledge and mercy flow from the Prophet's house toward the servants of *Allah* and the righteous, and in the next world (which is a great illustration of this condition) the fountain of the divine pure drink will originate from his house and therefore, to the houses of other believers.

The term /yufajjirūn/ is based on the word /tafjīr/ which, itself, is derived from the root /fajara/ which means ***'to cause water to flow'*** or ***'to break'*** on a large scale, whether breaking the earth or anything else. When, as it seems, the light of the morning breaks the dark curtain of the night; this light is called /fajr/. Also, they call an evildoer /fājir/ (wicked), because he breaks open the curtain of modesty and piety. However, in this verse it means ***'the opening of the ground'***.

It is remarkable that among the many blessings of Heaven, referred to in this Sura, the first to be mentioned is this ***'special pure fragrant drink'***. Perhaps, because after passing their account on the Day of Judgment and on their arrival into Heaven, by drinking this drink, they clear their hearts from any grief, discomfort and impurity. Then, they can benefit from the other divine blessings, while they are basking in the love of *Allah*.

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In the following verses, the deeds and qualifications of the ***'Righteous'*** and ***'servants of Allah'*** are described. Their eligibility for such unparalleled blessings is reasoned through having five characteristics. It says: ***"They fulfill (their) vows and fear a Day; the chastisement of which is widespread"***.

The terms ***'they fulfill (their) vows'*** and ***'fear Allah'*** (including some later sentences, which are all said in the present tense) indicate that this is their ever-existing, routine practice.

As was explained, earlier, regarding the occasion of revelation, the true essence of these verses is targeted at Ali, Fatima, Hassan and Hosain ***(p.b.u.th.)***, for they fulfilled their vows of fasting for three consecutive days, and did not break their fast, at the end of each day, but by only drinking water and their hearts were filled with the fear of *Allah* and the Day of Judgment.

The term /mustaṭīr/ means ***'vast'***, or ***'scattered'***, which refers to the great and various punishments on that Great Day.

When they fulfilled their own vow, they definitely respected and fulfilled what *Allah* has made obligatory. Their fear of the chastisement of the Great Day was due to their deep belief in the Resurrection, and to their intensive responsibility in regard to *Allah's* command.

They truly believed in the Resurrection and the penalties which are waiting for the wrong-doers. This belief is made manifest by their own sincere actions.

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Then, referring to the third worthy deed of the Righteous, it says:

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***"And they feed, for the love of Allah, the indigent, the orphan, and the captive."***

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Donating food at the time of severe self-need requires great generosity. It was not simply feeding someone, since their action demanded sacrifices at a time when they, themselves, were in the greatest need.

On the other hand, this has a broad implication which includes: the indigent, orphans and captives; and hence, their generosity covers a large variety of *'needy'*. The embedded meaning in the Arabic text /'alā hubbihī/ refers to *'the food'* and denotes the fact that they donated the food which they craved for. This conforms with the sense of **Sura Al-i-'Imrān, No. 3, verse 92** which says: ***"By no means shall you attain righteousness unless you give freely (benevolently) of that which you love,..."***

The meaning of / miskīn / *'indigent'*, / yatīm / *'orphan'* and / asīr / *'captive'* are clear, but, among the commentators, there is no agreement as to the exact meaning and the kind of / asīr / *'captive'*, which is mentioned in the verse; but on the whole, the word *'captive'* refers to one who was taken captive in the wars with atheists or polytheists.

According to the occasion of revelation, a captive had come to the door of Ali's house, when usually a captive would have been put in prison.

As we understand from history, the explanation is that at the time of Mohammad *(p.b.u.h.)*, there were no prisons at all. The Prophet

*(p.b.u.h.)* distributed the captives among the Muslims to guard, however, he told them to be kind to the captives and to take good care of them. At times when those Muslims had problems in providing for their captives, they asked for help from other fellow Muslims. The 'guards' went with the captive or they sent him alone to seek their help. It is known that at that period in history, Muslims had very difficult times. Later, as the Muslims' territory and rule spread and when the number of criminal captives increased, with the spread of government, jails were built and the expenses were paid from the Muslims' treasury.

In any event, we understand from the above verse that one of the best acts is feeding the poor and the needy; not only those of Muslims, but also the poor and the needy from other territories and even pagans are included as a matter of Islamic routine. It is so important that feeding them is considered one of the prominent good deeds of ***'the righteous'***.

It has been narrated that the Prophet *(p.b.u.h.)* told the believers that they should treat the captives well and fair. When the Muslims heard this; giving priority to captives, they even, at times, donated their own food to them.[1]

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The fourth prominent characteristic of the Righteous is considered to be ***'pureness and sincerity'***; it says: ***"(Saying): ' We feed you for the sake of Allah alone: no reward do we desire from you, nor thanks.' "***

They behave, thus, not only in the case of feeding the needy, but what they do is also sincere and for the sake of *Allah*. They desire no reward nor thanks from anyone.

Basically, in Islam, the value of an action is in its sincerity and pure immaculate intention, and hence, activities which have worldly motivations, whether they be hypocritical or for people's approval and appreciation or for lusts or for venal rewards, have no Islamic or moral value. A famous tradition from the Prophet *(p.b.u.h.)*, which attests to this fact, says: "***No deed is accepted unless (it is done) with the pure intention for Allah.***"

The term /w ajh/ means literally ***'face, countenance'*** then, the

1 Kāmil-i-Ibn-i-Athīr, vol. 2, p. 131.

meaning of /wajh-i-llah/ is *'The face of Allah'*, but we know that *Allah* does not have a bodily face. *'Face'* is the symbol of personality or self, then the meaning is *'the essence of Allah'* as we read in **Sura Baqarah, No. 2, verse 272**: "*...when you spend not except in search of Allah's countenance...*". And also from **Sura Kahf, No. 18, verse 28**, it says: "*And restrain yourself along with those who call on their Lord morning and evening desiring His countenance...*"

On the last characteristic of *'The Righteous'* it says: "*We only fear from our Lord a day, frowningly severe*". This statement can be made by their own tongue or by their mute mannerisms. The term '*frowning*' is usually used to describe the persons who are distraught, hence it is used for the Day of Judgment, since the Day and its events are so stern and distressful that not only people are frowning, but the Day, itself, is also frowning. The term /qamtarīr/ has often been used in the sense of *'being stern and calamitous'.*

Here, a question arises: The Righteous act only for the sake of *Allah*, then why are they afraid of *His* punishment? Does their divine motive match with the motive of fear of the punishments on the Day of Judgment? Paying attention to one point makes the answer to the question clear.

The Righteous do everything, in any case, for the sake of *Allah*. If they are afraid of the punishments on the Day of Judgment, it is because they are *His* punishments and if they love for the Blessings of Heaven, it is because they are *His* blessings. This is the same fact that is discussed in Islamic jurisprudence about the intention of a devotional act which says: *devotional acts, for gaining Allah's affinity, do not contradict the desire of reward and the fear of punishment or even asking Allah for worldly gifts, such as the prayer of asking for rain, because all of them relate to Allah; though the high stage of a devotional act is that it is done totally only for the love of Allah, not for the desire of the Blessings in Heaven or for the fear of punishment in Hell.*

The verse: "*We only fear from our Lord a Day, frowningly severe*" attests to the fact that this fear is also like having the fear of *Allah*.

It is noteworthy that the second and the fifth characteristics are both on the subject of fear, but with a difference, in that, the former only mentions the fear of the Day of Judgment, while in the latter it refers to the fear of *Allah* on that Day. At one point, *'Day'* is

described by *'the chastisement of which is widespread'* and another time it is characterized as *'frowning and calamitous'*. In fact, one shows its vastness and the other refers to its spiritual quality.

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Verse No. 11 points to a part of the result of the good deeds and pure intentions of the Righteous. It says: "***Therefore, Allah will guard them against the evil of that Day and will grant over them a Light of Beauty and a (blissful) joy.***"

The term /nadrah/ means '***a special refreshment and happiness resulting from the abundance of blessing and comfort***'. Truly, their appearance shows their inner calmness and happiness on that Day. Therefore, if they feared the Day, because of their responsibility in this world, on that Day *Allah* would make them happy in return.

The term /laqāhu m/ ***'they meet'***, used in this verse, is very interesting and meaningful. It shows that *Allah* receives them with *His* Grace, and places them in the Light of *His* Mercy and because of this, they are full of joy and happiness.

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***Feeding the starved is of the greatest good deeds.***

Feeding the needy is one of the prominent good deeds of ***'the Righteous'*** and ***'the servants of Allah'***. This is mentioned not only in the above verses, but it is also emphasized in many other verses of the Qur'an. Hence, it is understood that this good deed is particularly appreciated by *Allah*.

Nowadays, according to the news broadcasts, every year millions of people die from starvation in some parts of the world, while in some other parts, so much extra food is discarded as garbage. If we pay attention to this, two points will become very clear. First, the absence of morals in today's world, and second, the need for Islamic instruction.

There are many Islamic narrations that seriously refer to this subject, some of which are as follows:

1. A tradition from the Prophet (***p.b.u.h.***) says: "***One who feeds three Muslims, will be fed, by Allah, from three lush gardens in the dominion of the heavens.***" [1]

1 Usūl-i-Kāfi, vol. 2, Chapter 'Feeding', Traditions 3 and 6.

2. A narration from Imam Sādiq (*p.b.u.h.*) says: "***One who feeds a Muslim believer to his fill, will be rewarded on the Day of Judgment so much so that neither a man nor an angel nor a Prophet knows the amount except Allah, who is Lord for all.***" [1]

Another narration from the same Imam says: "***I prefer to feed a needy believer than only to visit him and I prefer to visit him than to free ten slaves.***" [2]

Notice that the narrations do not emphasize on feeding only the needy and the starved, but some of them denote that feeding the believers is as important as freeing a slave even though the believer is not in need of the food. This shows that the main goal, besides feeding someone, is gaining the hearts and strengthening friendly relations. However, the opposite case is seen among many people today.

Sometimes two close friends or two relatives go to a hotel and each of them pays his own share, as if paying the expenses of the other is something unheard of, especially if the number of the guests is large.

Some narrations stipulate that feeding the starved, in general, (irrespective of believers or unbelievers) is of the best deeds. For example, a tradition from the Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*) says: "***One of the greatest deeds, in the sight of Allah, is to soothe the heartached and to feed the starved. By Him in Whose hand is Mohammad's soul; the Muslim who, being satisfied with food, sleeps at night while his Muslim brother or neighbour is hungry, has not really believed in me (my prophecy)!***" [3]

Although the last part of the aforementioned tradition is about feeding the Muslims, the first part covers all the starved and the vastness of the meaning may cover even the animals.

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1 Usūl-i-Kāfi, vol. 2, Chapter 'Feeding', Traditions 3 and 6.

2 Usūl-i-Kāfi, vol. 2, Chapter 'Feeding', Tradition 18.

3 Bihār-al-Anwār, vol. 74, p. 369.

# Sura Insan (Man)

*No. 76 (verses 12-22)*

١٢ وَجَزٰهُمْ بِمَا صَبَرُوْا جَنَّةً وَّحَرِيْرًا ○

١٣ مُّتَّكِـِٕيْنَ فِيْهَا عَلَى الْاَرَآئِكِ لَا يَرَوْنَ فِيْهَا شَمْسًا وَّلَا زَمْهَرِيْرًا ○

١٤ وَدَانِيَةً عَلَيْهِمْ ظِلٰلُهَا وَذُلِّلَتْ قُطُوْفُهَا تَذْلِيْلًا ○

١٥ وَيُطَافُ عَلَيْهِمْ بِاٰنِيَةٍ مِّنْ فِضَّةٍ وَّاَكْوَابٍ كَانَتْ قَوَارِيْرَا ○

١٦ قَوَارِيْرَا مِنْ فِضَّةٍ قَدَّرُوْهَا تَقْدِيْرًا ○

١٧ وَيُسْقَوْنَ فِيْهَا كَاْسًا كَانَ مِزَاجُهَا زَنْجَبِيْلًا ○

١٨ عَيْنًا فِيْهَا تُسَمّٰى سَلْسَبِيْلًا ○

١٩ وَيَطُوْفُ عَلَيْهِمْ وِلْدَانٌ مُّخَلَّدُوْنَ اِذَا رَاَيْتَهُمْ حَسِبْتَهُمْ لُؤْلُؤًا مَّنْثُوْرًا ○

٢٠ وَاِذَا رَاَيْتَ ثَمَّ رَاَيْتَ نَعِيْمًا وَّمُلْكًا كَبِيْرًا ○

٢١ عَالِيَهُمْ ثِيَابُ سُنْدُسٍ خُضْرٌ وَّاِسْتَبْرَقٌ وَّحُلُّوْٓا اَسَاوِرَ مِنْ فِضَّةٍ وَسَقٰهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ شَرَابًا طَهُوْرًا ○

٢٢ اِنَّ هٰذَا كَانَ لَكُمْ جَزَآءً وَّكَانَ سَعْيُكُمْ مَّشْكُوْرًا ○

# Sura Insan (Man)

## *No. 76 (verses 12-22)*

*12. "And Allah will reward them for their patience, with a garden and clothes of silk (in Heaven)."*

*13. "Reclining therein upon raised thrones, they will see (find) there neither the severe (heat of) the sun nor the bitter cold (of the moon)."*

*14. "And the shades of the (Garden) will come low over them, and the bunches (of fruit), there, will hang low in humility (being easy to pick)."*

*15. "And amongst them will be passed vessels of silver and goblets of crystal."*

*16. "(Bright as) crystal, made of silver; they will determine the appropriate measure."*

*17. "And they will be given to drink, there, a cup (of pure drink) mixed with Zanjabeel (ginger)."*

*18. "(From) a spring, there, named Salsabeel."*

*19. "And round about them will (serve) youths of perpetual (freshness): if you saw them, you would think them scattered pearls."*

*20. "And when you look, you will see a Bliss and a Realm Magnificent."*

*21. "Upon them will be Green Garments of fine silk and heavy brocade, and they will be adorned with Bracelets of silver and their Lord will give to them to drink of a Drink Pure and Holy."*

*22. "Verily this is a reward for you, and your endeavour is accepted and appreciated."*

**Commentary:**

***Great Rewards in Heaven***

The aforementioned verses have a slight hint of the good and the Righteous and show that they are delivered from the evils and painful chastisements on Doomsday and are covered by *Allah's* light of beauty and blissful joy. Now, the following verses refer to at least fifteen blessings in Heaven.

First, some Heavenly clothes and the settlement of the blessed ones, in Heaven, are spoken about. It says: "***And Allah will reward them, for their patience, with a garden and clothes of silk (in Heaven).***"

Yes, *Allah* sets them in special gardens of Heaven and dresses them in the best clothes due to their constancy and their altruism, such as their loyalty to their vow, fasting and donating their food to the indigent, the orphan and the captive, at the time when they were in need of it and were preparing to break their fast.

Not only in this verse, but also in many other verses throughout the Holy Qur'an, this fact is stipulated: all rewards, in the Hereafter, are (paid) in full for Man's patience and constancy, i.e. patience for obedience, patience for avoiding sins, and patience for standing firm against difficulties and hardships.

**Sura Ra'd, No. 13, verse 24** denotes that angels will receive the blessed ones, in Heaven, in the following manner: "***Peace unto you for that you persevered in patience...***". And in **Sura Mo'minūn, No. 23, verse 111**, it says: "***I have rewarded them, this day, for their patience and constancy. They are indeed the ones that have achieved bliss.***"

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It goes on to say: "***Reclining therein upon raised thrones, they will see (find) there neither the severe (heat of) the sun nor the bitter cold (of the moon)***."

Usually when people want to have a rest they sit somewhere and recline and that is why the verse says: "***Reclining therein upon raised thrones...***". Then, to portray the complete comfort in the moderate weather, of Heaven, the end of the verse says: there is "***...neither the severe (heat of) the sun nor the bitter cold (of the moon)***".

It does not definitely denote that the *'sun and moon'* will not exist there, but, regarding the shade of the trees in the gardens of Heaven, the excessive heat of the sun will not exist.

The term /zamharīr/ is based on /zamhar/ which has the following meanings: 1. 'excessive cold' 2. 'excessive anger' 3. 'redness of eyes due to anger'; the first meaning, however, is understood here and there is a narration that says there is a place in Hell where the limbs shatter due to the excessive cold.[1]

The term /arā'ik/ *'thrones'* is the plural form of /arīkah/ *'throne'* and originally means: '*a couch for the bride in the bride-chamber*', but, here it means '*a seat covered with a canopy and highly decorated*'.

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Enumerating the blessings of Heaven, the next verse says: "*And the shade of the (Garden) will come low over them, and the bunches (of fruit), there, will hang low in humility (being easy to pick)*". In the Garden, there will be no hindrance, not a thorn to pierce the fingers, nor a need to lift a finger to pick the fruit.

It is necessary to note, again, that the life in that world is very different from the life in this world. The blessings mentioned in these verses, as well as other verses in the Holy Qur'an, are only some slight, albeit meaningful, hints to the great benefits in Heaven; and according to some narrations, there are blessings there that no eyes have ever seen, no ears have ever heard, and no minds have ever considered.

Ibn-Abbās says that "*The blessings the Lord has mentioned, in the Holy Qur'an, are those which their names we are only acquainted with.*" For instance, He mentions a '*pure drink mixed with Zanjabil (ginger)*' and *'ginger'* is an aromatic root which Arabs like for its smell.[2]

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The next verse refers to the feast in Heaven, the furnishings and those who will entertain in those surroundings. It says: "*And amongst them will be passed vessels of silver and goblets of crystal*".

The vessels are "*(Bright as) crystal, made of silver; they will determine the appropriate measure*". The mentioned vessels will be full of

1 Durr-al-Manthūr, vol. 6, p. 300.

2 Majma'-al-Bayān, vol. 10, p. 411.

various Heavenly foods and the crystal goblets will be full of pleasant aromatic drinks. The quantity will be as much as they wish and according to their taste and desires and will be served by Heavenly youths.

The term /āniyah/ is the plural form of /anā'/, which means '***dishes of any kind***', and the term /akwāb/ is the plural form of /kūb/ which means '***a water container without a handle,***' which is sometimes called '***goblet***'. The term /qawārīr/ is the plural form of /qārūrah/ which means '***containers made of crystal or glass***'.

It seems strange that the vessels should be (bright as) crytal, but they are made of silver. In this world no one can find such a thing. Here, in this world, the crystal vessels are made of quartz. The stone is melted and then made into a crystal-type container. The Creator, Who makes it possible for us to change hard, dark stone into a clear, transparent glass, is capable of achieving the same results, for the next world, with a metal such as silver.

So, from this description we understand that the vessels, and the containers in Heaven, are both as bright as crystal and as beautiful and splendid as silver, so much so that the liquids contained therein can be clearly seen.

There is a tradition from Imam Sādiq (***p.b.u.h.***) which says: "***Man, in Heaven, can see through silver just as he can see through glass and crystal in this world.***"[1]

We also know that, today, scientists have found special rays (such as X-ray) which pass through solid matter and show the inner properties, similar to the way we can see through glass or crystal.

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Continuing, it says: "***And they will be given to drink, there, a cup (of pure drink) mixed with Zanjabeel (ginger)***".

Many commentators have said that Arabs were pleased with drinking wine mixed with ginger, because it made the wine tastier. Now, the Holy Qur'an speaks about '***a cup (of pure drink)***' which is mixed with Zanjabeel (ginger), but it is obvious that this mixed drink is completely different from that of wine. In other words, the difference between

1 Majma'-al-Bayān, vol. 10. p. 410.

these two kinds of drink is as far as the distance between this world and the next world.

It seems that Arabs, of the past, used to drink two kinds of wine in two forms: One of them was warm and stimulating, which was mixed with ginger; and the other one was cool and narcotic, which was mixed with camphor.

Since the other world's facts cannot be stated in worldly language, we are compelled to use our limited human vocabulary for explaining and trying to understand the sublime meanings to the wonderful facts found in the Holy Qur'an.

Commentators have given many different definitions for '*Zanjabeel*' (ginger), but most of them have said that it means: ***a tropical plant grown for its aromatic root used for flavoring food and drink.***

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These Heavenly cups of drink are filled "***(From) a spring, there, named Salsabeel***" and according to Arabic terminology, Salsabeel is a very enjoyable drink which flows easily into the mouth and down the throat; being quite refreshing.

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To describe the happy feast, held in Heaven, the next verse speaks about those who entertain, there, and it says: "***And round about them will (serve) youths of perpetual (freshness); if you saw them you would think them scattered pearls***".

The youths, themselves, their youthfulness, freshness, vigour, mirth and beauty are immortal, and, therefore, their entertainment would be eternal as well. This idea is understood from the terms /muxallādun/ ***'of perpetual'*** and /yaṭūf-u-'alayhim/ ***'round about them will serve'***.

The term '***scattered pearls***' shows both the attractive beauty and brightness of the youths, as well as their presence, everywhere, at the Divine feast. It, also, implies that the blessings in the New World cannot be explained exactly.

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Then, the next verse is expressed very meaningfully: "***And when you look you will see a Bliss and a Realm Magnificent***".

There are many commentaries on the word /na'īm/ *'Bliss'* and the terms /mul-kan kabī-rā/ *'Realm Magnificent'*.
Among them are the following:

1. A narration from Imam Sādiq (*p.b.u.h.*) cites: "*The verse means that it is an Estate (or Realm) that neither fades nor vanishes.*"[1]
2. The blessings in Heaven are so plentiful and various that no one can explain them.
3. A '*Realm Magnificent*' is a place in Heaven where the angels enter by the permission of the Blessed, and greet them upon their arrival.
4. Whatever the Blessed wish for, there, they obtain.
5. The lowest Blessed (from the point of rank), in Heaven, has so large a domain that when he (she) looks he (she) can see a thousand years' distance.
6. A permanent immortal '*Realm*' where the wishes are completely fulfilled.

The word /na'īm/ '*Bliss*' and the terms /mul-kan kabī-rā/ '*Realm Magnificent*', referring to the vast gardens in Heaven, have such vast meanings that they can cover all the above commentaries.

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To this end, some Heavenly blessings were pointed out such as: provinces, thrones, shades, fruits, drinks, vessels and those who entertain the Blessed, in Heaven. Then, attention is paid to some Heavenly ornaments of those who had just passed the great Event of Judgment and says: "*Upon them will be Green Garments of fine silk and heavy brocade,...*".

The term /sundus/ *'garment'* means *'a thin silk cloth'* while /istabraq/ *'brocade'* means *'a thick silk cloth'*. Some commentators say the latter is derived from the Persian term /setabr/ *'thick'*, but some others believe it is derived from the Arabic term /barq/ *'shining'*. The verse continues: "*...and they will be adorned with bracelets of silver...*".

The silver, there, is so bright that it glitters like crystal and it is more beautiful than rubies and pearls.

The term /asāwir/ is the plural form of /aswarah/ '*bracelet*' and is originally derived from /dastvar/ *'a bracelet'*, a Persian word, with some phonetical changes in Arabic, of course.

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1 Majma'-al-Bayān, vol. 10, p. 411.

'*Green*' is the color of the Garments mentioned in the verse, because this color is the most refreshing to the eye; like the leaves on the trees, and fits in well with the '*Garden*'. There are several kinds of green color, of course, each of which has its own elegance.

In some other verses of the Holy Qur'an, we see that the Blessed are decorated with golden bracelets, as for instance; in **Sura Kahf, No. 18, verse 31**, it says: "*...they will be adorned therein with bracelets of gold,....*" This does not contrast with the current verse in this Sura, because people may decorate themselves with a variety of ornaments.

The question may arise, "Aren't silver and gold bracelets used by women as ornaments, then, why are they both mentioned for all the Blessed, i.e. men and women?".

The answer is that among many groups of people, it is common for both men and women to use gold and silver for ornamentation, but the kind of bracelet is different (though in Islam using gold as an ornament, by men, is forbidden in this world).

In **Sura Zukhruf, No. 43, verse 53**, it says: "*Then why are not gold bracelets bestowed on him?...*" and it is understood that golden bracelets, used by men, had been a sign of dignity among ancient Egyptian people.

Moreover, as we have frequently said, the facts of the other world cannot be described, exactly, with our very insufficient, limited human vocabulary.

And, finally, at the end of the verse, as to the best and greatest Heavenly Blessing of these kinds, it remarks: "*...and their Lord will give to them to drink of a Drink Pure and Holy*".[1]

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In the preceeding verses, among the blessings mentioned were Drinks and Cups; which were filled from the fountain of '*Salsabeel*' and quenched the thirst of the Blessed. But, there is a considerable difference between those drinks and what is expressed in this verse.

On the one hand, the '*ones who serve*' are "*youths of perpetual (freshness)*"; while, here, the '*one who serves*' is *Allah*, Himself (and what a wonderful expression!) The word 'Lord' is especially stressed.

1 Nūr-uth-Thaqalayn, vol. 5, p. 485, tradition 6.

The Lord Who has constantly cherished man and Who is his owner and trainer; Who has helped him to advance in the course of development until he has reached the last stage. And now, it is time to show the culmination of His Lordship and make the Righteous quenched and cheerful with the cup of Pure Drink, by His own mighty hand.

On the other hand, the word /tahūr/ means something which is both pure and purifying. Thus, the Drink purifies both man's body and soul from any taint and impurity.

It gives him such sprituality, brightness, and merriment that it is indescribable with our limited human vocabulary.

It is quoted from Imam Sādiq (***p.b.u.h.***) that, "***(This drink) purifies man's heart and soul from everything except Allah***".

It removes any ignorance, unveils any curtain over the truth and makes man worthy of an eternal presence in close proximity to Allah. The pleasure of this pure Drink exceeds any other blessing and is superior to any other gift.

While the filthy wine of this world obliterates Man's reason and takes him far away from *Allah*, the pure Drink, which is given by the hand of 'the ones who serve', alienates him from everything, but *Allah*, and makes him immersed in *His* Beauty and Glory.

In short, the favour which is included in this verse and in this blessing, is above anything else.

It is concluded from one of the traditions quoted from the Prophet (***p.b.u.h.***) that the fountain of Pure Drink is at the threshold of Paradise; then, with a sip of this Pure Drink, *Allah* purifies their hearts from envy (and any other vices). Thus, the verse states: "***...and their Lord will give to them to drink of a Drink Pure and Holy***".

It is worth considering that the word /tāhur/ ***'pure'*** has been mentioned for only two items in the Holy Qur'an.

The first is about the ***'rain'*** (**Sura Furqān, No. 48, verse 25**) which purifies and revives everything. And, the second is in the current verse about the special Divine Drink, which is also purifying and reviving.

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In the last verse, of this part, the last point on this subject is presented. It states that these great blessings and unique gifts are a

recompense for your deeds; and your efforts, struggles and diligence are accepted and thanked. ("***Verily this is a reward for you, and your endeavor is accepted and appreciated.***")

Never should one think that these gifts and great rewards are unduly given. Indeed, all these are a recompense for Man's endeavors and deeds; and they are a reward for man's diligence, self-perfection and abandonment of pleasure in sin.

This point also mentions a particular pleasure that *Allah*, Himself, or His angels address to man and tell him: "***Verily this is a reward for you, and your endeavor is accepted and appreciated.***" And perhaps according to some commentators, this blessing, where *Allah* thanks Man, is superior to all other blessings.

The verb /kāna/ *'was'*, which is in the past tense, perhaps refers to this point: that these blessings have beeen prepared for you (the Righteous) in advance. As when one pays careful attention to detail and prepares everything, in advance, for his guest.

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# Sura Insan (Man)

*No. 76 (verses 23-26)*

٢٣ اِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْقُرْاٰنَ تَنْزِيْلاً ○

٢٤ فَاصْبِرْ لِحُكْمِ رَبِّكَ وَلاَ تُطِعْ مِنْهُمْ اٰثِمًا اَوْ كَفُوْرًا ○

٢٥ وَاذْكُرِ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ بُكْرَةً وَّاَصِيْلاً ○

٢٦ وَمِنَ الَّيْلِ فَاسْجُدْ لَهُ وَ سَبِّحْهُ لَيْلاً طَوِيْلاً ○

*23. "Surely We, Ourselves, have revealed the Holy Qur'an to you, revealing (it) in stages."*

*24. "Therefore be patient and constant to the command of your Lord, and obey not from among them a guilty or an ungrateful one."*

*25. "And remember the name of your Lord morning and evening,"*

*26. "And during the night prostrate thyself to Him; and glorify Him (a) long (part of the) night."*

**Commentary:**

*Five Great Instructions for the Fulfillment of Allah's Command.*

The aforementioned verses of the Sura are about the creation of Man and then about his rebirth at the time of Resurrection. Now, the verses are referring to the Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*), directly, with some emphatical instructions about the guidance of Man and his patience and constancy. In fact, these verses show the way of how to approach the incomparable immense blessings. This task is not possible except

through taking hold of the Qur'an, following the Prophet's leadership and being inspired by his instructions.

At first it says: "***Surely We, Ourselves, have revealed the Qur'an to you, revealing (it) in stages.***"

Some commentators have said that the term /tanzīlā/ '***revealing in stages***', which has appeared as a direct object in this verse, denotes the gradual descent of the Holy Qur'an, whose effect on man's training is clear. Some others believe that it refers to the high position of this Heavenly book and emphasizes the fact that this book was sent down by *Allah*, inspite of those who accused the Prophet (***p.b.u.h.***) of being a necromancer, sorcerer, magician and caluminator of *Allah*.

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Then, there are five important instructions given to the Prophet (***p.b.u.h.***). The first is for patience and constancy, and says: "***Therefore be patient and constant to the command of your Lord,...***"

Don't be afraid of the difficulties and the problems that occur in your way, the great number of your enemies or their obstinacy. Continue on your way and go forward.

It is noteworthy that, with regard to /f/ in the Arabic term /fasbir/ ***'therefore be patient and constant'***, the instruction for patience is secondary to the revelation of the Qur'an by *Allah*. That is: since *Allah* is your supporter then do stay firmly on the way. The term /rabb/ ***'Lord, Cherisher'*** points to the same idea.

And in the second instruction the Prophet (***p.b.u.h.***) is warned not to listen to or obey the unjust. It says: "***...and obey not from among them a guilty or an ungrateful one.***"

In fact, the second instruction is an emphasis on the first instruction, because numerous enemies tried, in different ways, to make the Prophet (***p.b.u.h.***) adapt to their way of thinking. It is said that 'Atabat-ibn-i-Rabī'ah' and 'Walīd-ibn-i-Muqayyarah' told the Prophet (***p.b.u.h.***) to leave his prophecy and they would give him as much wealth and the most beautiful ladies to marry as would satisfy him and other suggestions like this, but the Prophet (***p.b.u.h.***) as a true, great leader, was instructed to be patient and constant against the evil temptations or the threats, which were made against him. He should not yield to either the allurements or the threats.

It is true that the Prophet (***p.b.u.h.***) never yielded, and this is a sign

for the greatness of his faith; an eternal model for other leaders of the Way.

Although some commentators have said that the term ***'sinner'*** refers to 'Atabat-ibn-i-Rabī'ah' and the term ***'ungrateful'*** refers to 'Walīd-ibn-i-Muqayyarah' or 'Abū Jahl'; each of whom were among the pagan Arabs, it is clear that the terms have a vast meaning, which encompasses any sinner and unbeliever; but these three were the most vivid evidences of the words.

It is also noteworthy that ***'sinner'*** has a general meaning which includes the ungrateful, too, then ***'ungrateful'*** is a subdivision of ***'sinner'***.

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However, since being patient and constant with many great difficulties is not easy to do and going on such a road needs two certain provisions, so, it says in the next verse: "***And remember the name of your Lord morning and evening.***"

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"***And during the night prostrate thyself to Him; and glorify Him (a) long (part of the) night***".

Under the light of '***remembering the Name of your Lord***', and with '***prostration and glorification***' you can build the necessary spiritual strength and sufficient support for overcoming the difficulties along the way.

The term /bukrah/ '***beginning of the day***' is opposite to the term /asil/ '***evening, sunset***', which is followed by praying at night and are mentioned in these two verses to show the necessity of continuous remembrance of *Allah* both day and night.

Some commentators have applied them to the five daily prayers; morning (Fajr), noon (Zohr), afternoon ('Asr), sunset (Maqrib) and evening ('Ishā) prayers, or in addition to the optional prayers after midnight. At any rate, it seems that these prayers are examples for this continuous remembrance of the Lord and glorification and prostration to *Him*.

The last two terms in the verse, /laylan tawīlā/, refer to the glorification of *Allah* for a long part of the night. It has been narrated that Imam Ali ibn-Musa-ar-Reza (***p.b.u.h.***) was asked what '***glorify***'

meant and he answered that it meant '***optional night prayer***'.[1]

It is probable that the above commentary is one of the clear evidences of '***glorification***' because the optional night prayer is very effective in strengthening ones' faith and self-will for obeying *Allah*, and refining spirits.

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It is worthy to note, here, that though the five instructions are addressed to the Prophet (***p.b.u.h.***), they are, in fact, models for all those who have a role in spiritual and humane guidance of societies.

They should know that, after being sure of their strong belief in their goal and prophetic mission, it is necessary for them to be patient and constant and not to be afraid of mass difficulties in their way; since, guiding populations has always been with great difficulties especially when faced with some unyielding ignorant enemies. And no prophetic mission of theirs will survive unless the leaders are patient.

In the next stage, they must strongly stand against evil temptations of the sinners and the ungrateful; those who try to lead astray leaders with all kinds of deceit and hypocrisy in order to make their prophetic mission fruitless. They should neither be deceived by allurements nor be afraid of threats.

In any case, every morning and evening, they should prostrate themselves before *Him* to obtain spiritual power, strong will and firm decision, especially when they get help in their supplications and night prayers; victory will surely be their own.

And, if it happens that they have a failure or misfortune at some point, along the way, it is possible to compensate for this under the light of these principles. The Prophet's life and his prophetic mission, throughout his career of inviting people to Islam, are good examples for those who wish to follow the straight path.

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1 Majma'-al-Bayān, vol. 10, p. 413.

# Sura Insan (Man)

*No. 76 (verses 27-31)*

٢٧ اِنَّ هٰٓؤُلَآءِ يُحِبُّوْنَ الْعَاجِلَةَ وَ يَذَرُوْنَ وَرَآءَ هُمْ يَوْمًا ثَقِيْلاً ○

٢٨ نَحْنُ خَلَقْنٰهُمْ وَ شَدَدْنَآ اَسْرَهُمْ وَاِذَا شِئْنَا بَدَّلْنَآ اَمْثَالَهُمْ تَبْدِيْلاً ○

٢٩ اِنَّ هٰذِهٖ تَذْكِرَةٌ فَمَنْ شَآءَ اتَّخَذَ اِلٰى رَبِّهٖ سَبِيْلاً ○

٣٠ وَ مَا تَشَآؤُنَ اِلَّآ اَنْ يَّشَآءَ اللّٰهُ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ عَلِيْمًا حَكِيْمًا ○

٣١ يُدْخِلُ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ فِىْ رَحْمَتِهٖ وَ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ اَعَدَّ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا اَلِيْمًا ○

*27. "They love the fleeting life and put away behind them a Day (that will be) hard and grievous."*

*28. "It is We Who created them and strengthened their joints and when We will We can substitute the like of them (in their place) by a complete change."*

*29. "Surely this is an admonishment, that whosoever will, (taking this straight way) may take a path unto his Lord."*

*30. "Yet you will not, unless Allah Wills; surely Allah is All-knowing, All-wise."*

*31. "He will admit to His Mercy whom He will, but (as for the) evildoers, He has prepared a painful penalty."*

### Commentary:

***This is an admonition; but it is you who choose the way.***

In the aforementioned verses, the Prophet was admonished and told that he should never be affected by offenders and pagans.

Historical evidences exist which confirm that there were some people who wanted to have an effect on the Prophet's thoughts by

alluring him to change his decision. They made offers of wealth, high social rank and beautiful women.

The following verse indicates the above and says: "***They love the fleeting life and put away behind them a Day (that will be) hard and grievous***".

The scope of their thought is open only to eating, sleeping and sensuality. These bodily enjoyments are their ideal. They weigh the Prophet's great soul with the same criterion. They are some blind-hearted people who are not aware of their future hard day. And what a hard day it will be! Hard from the point of punishment; hard from the point of reckoning, and hard from the point of the length of time of being dishonored and bearing the responsibility of spreading scandals for their vices.

In fact, they will have the day in front of them but, here, using the term /warā' ahum/ ***'behind them'*** instead of ***'in front of them'*** is to denote carelessness, as if they put away the day behind them. But, some interpreters have said that the Arabic word /warā '/ has the meaning of ***'behind'*** in some texts and of ***'forward'*** in some others.[1]

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In the next verse they are warned not to be proud of their strength, because it is *Allah* who gave it, and other faculties, to them so whenever *He* Wills *He* can take these back at once. Look again at the sentiments of the verse: ***"It is We Who created them and strengthend their joints and when We Will, We can substitute the like of them (in their place) by a complete change"***.

The term /asr/, in Arabic etymology, means: ***'to fasten with a chain'*** and that is why ***'captives'*** are called 'asīr' in Arabic. In the old days, captives were fastened with chains. But, here in this verse, ***'asr'*** means ***'to firm the joints'*** of Man which strengthens him to move about and enables him to carry out his activities, efficiently.

Certainly, the Qur'an has touched on a most fascinating point: ***'firming the different joints of Man'***, which consists of small and large nerves; connecting tissues that bind muscles to each other; rope-like

1 If the term /wara'/ is added to the subject it means 'behind', and if it is added to the object it means 'forward, front': Rūh-al-Bayān, vol. 8, p. 439.

ligaments and the various muscles themselves.

Small and large pieces of bone, clothed in flesh, comprise the body and are so uniquely tied together that it totally forms a complete unit (Man), which is able to do almost anything. On the whole, the statement is about man's strength.

This verse also makes it clear that *Allah* is self-sufficient (free from want) and is not in need of their faith and their obedience but, it is only to make them understand. If the verse insists on their faith, it is a grace from *Allah's* favor to them.

There is a similar sense in **Sura An'ām , No. 6, verse 133**, which says: *"And thy Lord is self-sufficient, full of Mercy. If it were His Will, He could destroy you and in your place appoint whom He will as your successors..."*.

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The next verse covers the general idea which the Sura conveys and, on the whole, it is a complete program for the happiness of Man: "***Surely this is an admonishment, that whosoever will, (taking this straight way) may take a path unto his Lord***".

It is for Us to show you the Way. There is no compulsion on you to choose it. It is you, using your wisdom, that must distinguish between right and wrong and of your own free-will decide which way to follow.

In fact, this is an emphasis on what was stated at the beginning of the Sura: *"Surely We guided..."*, ie. '***We showed him the Way; whether he be grateful (and assumes it) or ungrateful***'.

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Since some feeble-minded persons may think of the verse as meaning absolute free-will for the servants, the next verse negates their claim by adding: "***Yet you will not unless Allah Wills; surely Allah is All-knowing, All-wise***". This is the confirmation of the principle of the medium status between fatalism and the idea of chaotic free-will.

On the one hand, it remarks that '***Allah shows the way, and choosing it is up to you***'. On the other hand, there is another fact added to it that "***Yet you will not unless Allah Wills***"; that is, you are not completely independent, but your power and your free-will depends on *Allah's* Will. It is *He* who has given them to you and whenever *He* Wills, *He* can take them back.

Thus, there is neither an absolute free-will nor an absolute compulsion, but it is a fine, subtle line between them. In other words, there is a kind of freedom which depends on *Allah's* Will; that at any moment *He* can take it back, if *He* Wills. In such a way, the servants are able to fulfill their responsibility, which is the secret of their improvement, while at the same time, they do not feel any independence or self-sufficiency.

In brief, the reason for this idea is so that the servants will not feel independent divine providence, but are in need of His guidance and support. When they are making a decision to do something, they call on his support.

Some of the commentators who believe in fatalism have taken this verse as an evidence of their doctrine. Among them is Fakhr-i-Rāzī, who said: ***"Take note that this verse is one of the verses in which the waves of fatalism surge"***.[1]

Yes, if we separate this verse from the former ones, this statement can be right, but paying attention to the fact that in one verse the possibility of the influence of Man's '***free-will***' is pointed out, and in another one the recognition of *Allah's* Will is mentioned, the same 'variety of conditions' clearly approves these conditions, (a place between them; a place between two extreme ends).

It is ironic that those who believe in '***free-will***' have seriously taken to heart this verse, to denote absolute free-will, and those who believe in fatalism have taken stock in the next verse, which addresses only fatalism. Each of these two groups tries to explain away its own idea with that single verse that it has chosen, but, when a correct understanding of a statement in Qur'an (as in any other text) is read, it is meant to be read in relationship to the other statements around it, without any prejudice.

The sentence: "***Surely Allah is All-knowing, All-wise***" at the end of the verse, may be a point with the same understanding. *Allah's* knowledge and wisdom is necessary for the servants' freedom on their way to success, otherwise there must be a compulsory success which cannot be a lasting one. Furthermore, *His* knowledge and wisdom does not compel some individuals to do only good deeds and some others to

1 Tafsīr-Fakhr-i-Rāzī, vol. 30, p. 262.

do evil, so that He would reward the former group and punish the latter one.

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Finally, in the last verse, of this Sura, a short and meaningful statement refers to the happy end of the righteous and dreadful destiny of the evildoers. It says: "***He will admit to His Mercy whom He will, but as for the evildoers He has prepared, for them, a painful Penalty***".

It is worth noting that at the beginning of the verse it is said: "***He will admit to His Mercy whom He will***", but at the end of the verse it concentrates on the painful penalty for the evildoers. This shows that His Will for distributing pain, follows the individual's Will for seeking to commit sin and also the contrary is true: His Will for bestowing blessings, follows the individual's Will for perfecting their faith in Allah and in doing good deeds. This is the very thing that is expected from Allah.

Though these clear evidences are available, there are some persons, such as Fakhr-i-Rāzī, who have taken the first part of the verse as an evidence for fatalism, and in so doing they have neglected the last part of the verse, which addresses free-will and the deeds of the evildoers.

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**Supplication:**

***O Lord! Admit us to your mercy, and keep us away from the painful penalty prepared for the evildoers.***

***O Lord! You showed us the way and we will follow. Please help us to stay firm and constant along Your way.***

***O Lord! We may not be of the righteous, but we love them. Please count us among them.***

The End

Sura Insān (Human)

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

# Sura Mursalat (Those Sent Forth)

*No. 77 (50 Verses)*

***Contents of the Sura:***

This Sura belongs to the early Meccan period and its name, **Mursalāt**, is taken from the first verse. After making some oaths, the text refers to the horrors of the Hereafter for those who reject the Truth. The refrain, "***Ah woe, that Day to the Rejecters of Truth***" is repeated ten times in the Sura and every time follows a new topic.

In addition to the oaths, the Sura gives some information about the fervent Hereafter and its grievous events, and then repeats the same refrain: "***Ah woe, that Day, to the Rejecters of Truth.***"

In the second stage, we learn about the woeful story of the sinners of past generations.

In the third stage, it lets us know a little about the creation's specialities.

In the fourth stage, we are informed of some divine Blessings on the Earth.

In the fifth stage, there are some messages in which the rejecters are warned of their painful penalty.

In every stage there is also a hint to an enlightening point and then the refrain follows. Sometimes, the blessings of just men are mentioned to show that both rewards and penalties are found, but the former is used for justification and the latter is for warning.

The refrain, in this Sura, has an association with the refrain in **Sura Rahmān, No. 55**, but with the difference that: **Sura Rahmān** speaks about the Blessings, but **Sura Mursalāt** describes the rejecters' punishments.

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### *The Virture of Studying this Sura:*

It is narrated from the Prophet *(p.b.u.h.)* that: "***One who studies Sura Mursalāt will be registered as a non-pagan***".[1]

Another narration from Imam Sādiq *(p.b.u.h.)* cites that: "***If one studies this Sura, Allah makes him familiar to Mohammad (p.b.u.h.)***".[2]

This reward is certainly for a person who studies it, thinks it over and acts accordingly. So, we see by a narration that some of the Prophet's close friends told him: "***Oh Mohammad, how soon you have grown old!***" He answered: "***Hūd, Vāqi'ah, Mursalāt, and Nabaa brought old age upon me***".[3]

It is worth considering that in all these Suras the circumstances of the Hereafter and the horrors of the Resurrection Day and the Great Judgement are illustrated; and are the very things that affected the Prophet's (*p.b.u.h.*) holy soul.

Obviously, reading without thinking and acting cannot be very fruitful.

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1 Majma'-al-Bayān, vol. 10, p. 414.

2 Ibid.

3 Khisāl-i-Sadūq, Chapter 4, Tradition 10.

# Sura Mursalat
## (Those Sent Forth)

*No. 77 (verses 1-15)*

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

١ وَالْمُرْسَلَاتِ عُرْفاً ○

٢ فَالْعَاصِفَاتِ عَصْفاً ○

٣ وَالنَّاشِرَاتِ نَشْراً ○

٤ فَالْفَارِقَاتِ فَرْقاً ○

٥ فَالْمُلْقِيَاتِ ذِكْراً ○

٦ عُذْراً اَوْ نُذْراً ○

٧ اِنَّمَا تُوعَدُونَ لَوَاقِعٌ ○

٨ فَاِذَا النُّجُومُ طُمِسَتْ ○

٩ وَاِذَا السَّمَاءُ فُرِجَتْ ○

١٠ وَاِذَا الْجِبَالُ نُسِفَتْ ○

١١ وَاِذَا الرُّسُلُ اُقِّتَتْ ○

١٢ لِاَيِّ يَوْمٍ اُجِّلَتْ ○

١٣ لِيَوْمِ الْفَصْلِ ○

١٤ وَمَا اَدْرٰكَ مَا يَوْمُ الْفَصْلِ ○

١٥ وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ○

# Sura Mursalat
## (Those Sent Forth)
### *No. 77 (Verses 1-15)*

**In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful**

*1. "By those (Angels) (winds) sent forth one after another,"*

*2. "And those who move as a hurricane;"*

*3. "By those who scatter far and wide,"*

*4. "And those who separate (one from another);"*

*5. "And by those who reveal the (Divine) Reminder,"*

*6. "To justify or to warn;"*

*7. "Surely that which you are promised (for the Resurrection) will befall."*

*8. "Then when the stars are extinguished;"*

*9. "And when the heaven is cleft asunder;"*

*10. "And when the mountains are carried away;"*

*11. "And when the prophets are called unto their time appointed (for witness);"*

*12. "For what Day is this (portent) deferred?"*

*13. "For the Day of Sorting out (right from wrong)".*

*14. "What do you know about the Day of Sorting out?".*

*15. "Ah woe, that Day, to the Rejecters of Truth!".*

**Commentary:**

***Allah's Promises Surely Befall! Woe to the Rejecters of Truth!***

At the beginning of this Sura, there are five oaths in five verses about which many comments have been made and they are:

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*"By those (Angels) (winds) sent forth one after another,"*

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*"And those who move as a hurricane;"*

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*"And By those who scatter far and wide,"*

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*"And those who separate (one from another);"*

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*"And By those (the prophets) who reveal the (Divine) Reminder,"*

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*"To justify or to warn;"*

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Now, let us see what these mysterious oaths, which announce some great events, mean. Here are three known ideas:

1. All five parts mean winds and hurricanes, which have an effective role in nature. If so, the verses mean:

*"By the winds sent forth one after another,"*
*"By the violent hurricanes which move;"*
*"By those which scatter clouds and bring down, to Earth, the lively droplets of rain through the clouds,"*
*"By those which scatter clouds after falling rain;"*
*"By the very winds which remind men of Allah."*

(Some others have said that the winds are of tormenting winds. This idea is opposite to the above, but it is also a reminder.)

2. If all the oaths are sworn to Angels, then, the verses would mean:

*"By the Angels sent forth (to the prophets) one after another," (or, the Angels sent forth with some definite known plans),"*
*"And by those who move, as a hurricane, to carry out their mission;"*
*"By those who deliver the heavenly verses and scatter them,"*
*"And those who, by this action, separate purity from evil;"*
*"And those who give Allah's Messages and instructions to prophets,"*

3. The first and the second oaths are about winds and hurricanes, but the third, the fourth and the fifth ones are about Angels and their mission: ie. distributing the verses, sorting out the right from the wrong and revealing *Allah's* instructions to prophets for justice and warning.

The first factor, which caused the third idea to form and separated these verses into two groups, is the conjunction '***and***' in two of the verses, and another form of relative juncture; the Arabic letter ' ف ' (f), which occurs in the rest.

The second factor is the important sense that verse seven consists of. All the oaths are for the subject matter of this verse, that is, the reality of the ***Resurrection*** and the ***Hereafter***.

We know that at the beginning of the Resurrection there will be many great happenings that will change the world. There will be violent storms, earthquakes, and some other shaking events on the one hand, and on the other hand, formation of the Great Judgment, where Angels divide the individuals' records, and separate the believers from unbelievers, communicating *Allah's* decree to them.

If the above five verses are stated according to this idea, they are suited to what they are sworn to, and, from this point of view, the last idea is superior to the first two.

The last word in verse five, /ẓikr/; '***Reminder***', means either the knowledge bestowed upon the prophets, or the verses revealed to them. And we know that in the verses of Qur'an the word ***'Qur'an'***, itself, means ***Reminder***; as we see in **Sura Al-Hijr, No. 15, verse 6**, ***"And they say: O thou to whom the Reminder is revealed! Thou art indeed a mad man!"***.

Gabriel, who revealed the Message to the holy Prophet ***(p.b.u.h.)***, was only one angel, but /mulqiyāt/ ***'angels'*** is in a plural form. Since, according to some narrations, sometimes large groups of angels accompanied Gabriel to bring the verses; as in **Sura 'Abasa, No. 80, verse 15** which denotes that verses are revealed to the Prophet ***(p.b.u.h.) "by the hands of Angels"***.

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What are these oaths for? The next verse uncovers the secret:

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*"Surely that which you are promised (for the Resurrection) will befall."*

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There is no doubt that resurrection and bringing man to life again, recompense and punishment, reckoning and retribution (judgment) are right and proper.

This verse demands that all of *Allah's* promises are sure irrespective of the promises to good-doers and evildoers in this world and in the Hereafter.

There is nothing mentioned about the Resurrection in this verse, but in the former verses there are some hints to Resurrection, which confirm that it exists. For example, giving life to the dead lands by sending down rain, which is an illustrative incident of Resurrection; revealing *Allah's* instructions to the prophets; and appointing Messengers, all of which would be meaningless without the Hereafter. Then, the promised Resurrection is bound to come.

Similar to that is **Sura Zāriyāt, No. 51, verse 22-23**: *"And in heaven is your sustenance,..." and "Then, by the Lord of heaven and earth, this is the very Truth..."*

The oath to the *Lord* /rabb/ *'the Owner, the Cherisher'* denotes that our sustenance is seriously true, and it is the *Lord's* Wisdom which demands that sustenance be provided to the creatures.

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Through the following three verses, the signs of that Day are pointed out: *"Then when the stars are extinguished;"*

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*"And when the sky is cleft asunder;"*

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*"And when the mountains are carried away;"*

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The word /tamasat/ is derived from /tams/ which means *'to efface'* or *'to obliterate (to destroy all trace of )'*, may refer to the extinction of the

stars or their dissolusion, but the first rendition is more fitting. A similar meaning is found in **Sura Takwīr, No. 81, verse 2**: *"And when the stars darken;"*.

The word /nasafat/ is derived from /nasf/ which originally means *'to winnow as chaff, the act of winnowing'*, but here, it means: *'to reduce the mountains to powder and scatter them abroad'*.

In general, from many verses of the Holy Qur'an it is understood that, at last, this physical world will end with some series of extremely horrible events, and its regularity will be terribly destroyed. Then the spiritual world will be substituted by a new order.

The events are so horrible and amazing that no single word or expression can describe them. Are the mountains which are reduced to powder and scattered abroad, and like events, describable?

Some commentators have said that, in comparison with these events, the greatest earthquakes Man has ever seen are like tiny firecrackers, which little boys explode for fun, and liken these horrifying events with the greatest atomic bombs.

At any rate, these meanings, in the Holy Qur'an, indicate the great difference between the physical world and the spiritual world .

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Then, in the following verse, one of the occurences at the gathering place, on the Day of Judgment, is defined:

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*"And when the prophets are called unto their time appointed (for witness)"*.

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The theme of this verse and that of **Sura A'rāf, No.7, verse 6** are similar: *"Then shall We question those to whom Our Message was sent and those by whom We sent it."*

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And then it adds: *" For what Day is this (portent) deferred?"*

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*"For the Day of Sorting out (right from wrong)."*

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This question, and its answer, shows the greatness of that Day, and what a clear and meaningful answer this is!: "***For the Day of Sorting out***". It is the Day of sorting out right from wrong, believers from unbelievers, good-doers from evildoers, and the Day of Judgment for all.

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And then: "***What do you know about the Day of Sorting out?***"

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What are we looking for when the Prophet (***p.b.u.h.***), having such extensive and broad knowledge and keen insight; by which he was able to discover the secrets of that mysterious world, could not deeply appreciate all the dimensions of that Day?

As it was repeatedly mentioned before, it is impossible for us, prisoners in this world of a cage, to understand all the great secrets of the Hereafter; we may only see its silhouette, but we believe in it.

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Then, the warning: "***Ah woe, that Day, to the Rejecters of Truth.***"

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The term /wayl/ '***woe***' is interpreted as '***punishment with destruction, any punishment, or, a site in Hell full of torment***'. This word is usually said to anyone or anything for whom or that which falls into misfortune and on whom one does not wish *Allah's* mercy to descend and, here, it is used for the painful fate of the rejecters on that Day.

'***The rejecters of Truth***' are those who do not believe in the Hereafter. And we know that those who reject the Day of Judgment and the Day of Reckoning easily commit any sin or corruption. But a firm belief in the reality of that Day demands virtue and responsibility in human beings.

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***Contents of the Oaths:***

In the above verses, it swears to the winds and hurricanes. This is because they have an important structural role in nature: they move the clouds and take them over dead lands, pouring down rain, and then scattering them.

Winds scatter seeds far and wide, here and there, and produce forests. They fertilize many of the plants and flowers. They change the weather, hot and cold, or moderate it. They clear the air of epidemics: they take the fresh air from green fields and bring it into cities to substitute its polluted one. They cause the seas to undulate and oxygenate the water, which is essential to the developing processes of living creatures in the seas. Surely, winds and breezes are beneficial to man in the world.

Some other verses of the above group swear to angels by which *Allah's* Messages and revelations, that cherish virtue and humanity, were gradually conveyed to the prophets' hearts like the winds that come gently as harbingers with blessings of rain and fertility. Winds are in the physical world while angels are in the spiritual world. Then *Allah's* oaths are to both the physical cherishers and the spiritual ones.

It is interesting to note that all the oaths are for the belief that *His* promise of mercy and justice in the Hereafter, ***'the Day of Sorting out'***, is indeed true.

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# Sura Mursalat
## (Those Sent Forth)
*No. 77 (verses 16-28)*

١٦ اَلَمْ نُهْلِكِ الْاَوَّلِينَ ○
١٧ ثُمَّ نُتْبِعُهُمُ الْاٰخِرِينَ ○
١٨ كَذٰلِكَ نَفْعَلُ بِالْمُجْرِمِينَ ○
١٩ وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ○
٢٠ اَلَمْ نَخْلُقْكُمْ مِنْ مَآءٍ مَهِينٍ ○
٢١ فَجَعَلْنَاهُ فِى قَرَارٍ مَكِينٍ ○
٢٢ اِلٰى قَدَرٍ مَعْلُومٍ ○
٢٣ فَقَدَرْنَا فَنِعْمَ الْقَادِرُونَ ○
٢٤ وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ○
٢٥ اَلَمْ نَجْعَلِ الْاَرْضَ كِفَاتاً ○
٢٦ اَحْيَآءً وَاَمْوَاتاً ○
٢٧ وَجَعَلْنَا فِيهَا رَوَاسِىَ شَامِخَاتٍ وَاَسْقَيْنَاكُمْ مَآءً فُرَاتاً ○
٢٨ وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ○

# Sura Mursalat
## (Those Sent Forth)
### *No. 77 (verses 16-28)*

*16. "Did We not destroy the men of old?"*
*17. "Then shall We make following (generations) follow them."*
*18. "Thus do We ever deal with men of sin."*
*19. "Ah woe, that Day, to the Rejecters of Truth."*
*20. "Did We not create you from a base fluid?"*
*21. "The which We placed in a safe abode; (firmly fixed)."*
*22. "For a period (of gestation) determined?"*
*23. "For We determine; and We are the best to determine (and then Resurrection is easy for Us to portend)"*
*24. "Ah woe, that Day, to the Rejecters of Truth!"*
*25. "Have We not made the earth (as a place) to draw together?"*
*26. "Both for the living and the dead,"*
*27. "And placed therein high mountains standing firm, and given you to drink (wholesome) sweet water?"*
*28. "Ah woe, that Day, to the Rejecters of Truth!"*

**Commentary:**

***They see these Signs of Power, yet they reject the Resurrection!***

Through these verses, Rejecters are warned in different ways and by various statements.

First, they are reminded of the old generation's fate: " ***Did We not destroy the men of old?"***

In our own times we can observe relics of old civilizations. Generations such as those of the 'Ad, the Thamūd, Noah's, Lot's and Pharaoh's were destroyed as punishment for their evil deeds; partly by flood, lightning and hurricane, and some generations by earthquakes and meteorites.

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*"Then shall We make following (generations) follow them."*

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*Allah's* Law is always the same. Sin or corruption prepares its own destruction. Should some be punished for sinning while others not?

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*"Thus do We ever deal with men of sin."*

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In fact, this verse is a confirmation to the destruction of the old generations and for the present and future generations, as well. Since *Allah's* punishment is neither for revenging nor settling His own personal account, it, therefore, depends on their own sinful deeds and on His superior wisdom.

Some believe that the word /awwalīn/ *'old'*, in this verse, refers to the generations of Noah, 'Ad and Thamūd; and the word /ākharīn/ *'following'* refers to the generations after them; such as those of Lot and Pharaoh. But taking note of the term /nutbi'uhum/ *"...shall we make follow (generations) follow them"*, which is in the future tense and /alam nuhlik/ *"Did We not destroy..."*, which is in past tense it, then, becomes clear that *'old'* refers to all the old generations who were destroyed by *Allah's* Will, and *'following'* refers to the sinners of the Prophet's *(p.b.u.h.)* time or those who will come into being after that and will commit sins and corruptions.

And, so, the warning: *"Ah woe, that Day, to the Rejecters of Truth."* The words *'that Day'*, here, means the Hereafter, when they will have their main punishment and retribution. The repetition of the verse is for emphasis, though they may have a chastisement even in this world.

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Then, it attracts their attention to the period of gestation which shows them the power and the authority of the *Creator* and also the abundance of His blessings to Man. Consequently, they understand His force, in regard to the Resurrection, and, they, themselves, owe *Allah* for His numerous blessings and respect Him.

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*"Did We not create you from a base fluid?"*

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*"The which We placed in a safe abode, (firmly fixed)".*

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A place where all the conditions for life, growth and protection of the foetus exists. It is so amazing and interesting that it causes everyone to wonder.

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*"For a period (of gestation) determined?"*

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A period of time that no one knows, but *Allah*. During this period many changes occur and every day the foetus enters a new phase in its development in that abode.

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*"For We determine; and We are the best to determine, (and then Resurrection is easy for Us to portend)".*

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This is the same reason for which the Qur'an has emphatically used in proving the possibility of the Resurrection. For example, in the beginning verses of **Sura Hajj, No. 22**, Mankind's attention is attracted to the process of their own physical growth; from lifeless matter to seed, fertilized ovum, foetus, child, youth, aged and death! How can they doubt that the author of all these wonderful stages in their lives, in this world, each of which is as important as the Resurrection, can also give them another kind of life after the end of this probationary life? How different is dust from sperm!

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*"Ah woe, that Day, to the Rejecters of Truth".*

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Woe to those who see these numerous wonders of His power and yet they deny Him.

In this respect, Imam Ali (*p.b.u.h.*) has said: "***O creature who has been equitably created and who has been nourished and looked after in the darkness of wombs with multiple curtains. You were originated from the essence of clay and put in a quiet place for a determined length and ordained time. You used to move in the womb of your mother as an embryo, neither responding to a call nor hearing any voice***".

"***Then you were taken out from the place in which you stayed to a place that you had not seen, and you were not acquainted with awaiting its benefits. Who guided you to obtain your sustenance from the milk of your mother's breast? Who taught you to express your demands with your cries? Verily, when you cannot fully understand your ownself, how can you understand your Creator? It is impossible for you to understand Allah from the attributes which are meant only for His creatures.***" [1]

In another part of the verses, the external nature and His blessings, in this great world, are described. These are proofs for both His authority and Mercy, and for the reality of Resurrection, while the former verses were about the creation of Man, himself.

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"***Have We not made the earth (as a place) to draw together?***"

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"***Both for the living and the dead***".

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The term /kifāt/ [2] '***a place where things are gathered together***' is derived from /kaft/ which means '***to gather together***', or '***to attach one thing to another***'. '***Birds flying fast***' is also called /kifāt/, since when they fly fast they gather their wings to their sides in order to move more quickly through the air.

It intends to say: Earth is a gathering place for all human beings; it gathers the living men and women over itself and gives them their needs totally, and envelops their dead bodies in its insides. If the

1 Nahj-ul-Balāqa, Sermon No. 162 (Arabic Version); Sermon No. 166 (English Version).

2 /Kifāta/ is the second object for its verb, and is infinitive; used as a subjective noun.

ground were not fit for burial, the bad smell and various diseases would arise from the corpses and this would be a disaster for the living ones.

Yes, the land, like a mother who gathers her children around her, gathers individuals over itself, caresses them, feeds them, dresses them, gives them residence, gives them all their needs, keeps their corpses in its inside, dissolves them and then causes their harmful effects to vanish.

Some commentators have used /kifāt/ in the sense of '***to fly quickly***' and have said that the term refers to the Earth's rotation around the Sun, and other movements, all of which were not known by people at the time of revelation of the Qur'an.

In the next verse, that is: "***...the living and the dead***", it seems that the first meaning is more suitable. Particularly, if we consider the following narration from Imam Ali (***p.b.u.h.***). When he was coming back from the Seffīn Battlefield he reached a cemetery outside the gate of Kūfa. He looked across it and said: "***This is the abode of the dead and where they dwell***", and then he looked towards the houses of the city and said: "***This is the abode of the living***". He wanted to tell others that there is not a long distance between the abode of the living and that of the dead, then, he recited the above verses: "***Have We not made the earth (as a place) to draw together?***" "***Both for the living and the dead.***" [1]

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Then, the Qur'an mentions one of the great blessings of *Allah* on the earth:

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"***And placed therein high mountains standing firm,...***"

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These high mountains and their underlying formations united together, on the one hand, protect the earth, armour-like, against the inner pressures and the pressures resulting from gravity and, on the other hand, they prevent the air's friction with the land by providing a break in the airmass with their peaks, and thirdly, they control the violent winds and storms. Then, in this way, they afford peace and

1 Tafsīr-i-Borhān, vol. 4, p. 417.

comfort to the earth's dwellers.

And, at the end of this verse, another gift from the mountains is cited:

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*"...and given you to drink wholesome sweet water?"*

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The '*wholesome sweet water*' is useful and lively both for 'you' and for 'your' animals, agriculture, and gardens.

It is true that all the sources of sweet water are from rain, but mountains play the primary role in supplying life with water: many headsprings and aqueducts stem from mountains; many of the rivers and streams originate from the heavy thick melting snow on the high mountains tops.

The tops of the mountains, because of their altitude, are the most useful for human beings, as they are far from the plains surface and they are always cold. They can keep the snow there for years and then the sun melts the snow, gradually, flowing into the streams.

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The refrain is repeated: *"Ah woe, that Day, to the Rejecters of Truth."*

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It is they who see these signs and the types of His Bounty and Power; the blessings by which they are continually benefited and, yet, deny the *Resurrection, His Justice* and *His Wisdom*.

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# Sura Mursalat
## (Those Sent Forth)
*No. 77 (verses 29-40)*

٢٩ اِنْطَلِقُوٓا اِلٰى مَا كُنْتُمْ بِهٖ تُكَذِّبُونَ ○
٣٠ اِنْطَلِقُوٓا اِلٰى ظِلٍّ ذِى ثَلٰثِ شُعَبٍ ○
٣١ لَا ظَلِيلٍ وَلَا يُغْنِى مِنَ اللَّهَبِ ○
٣٢ اِنَّهَا تَرْمِى بِشَرَرٍ كَالْقَصْرِ ○
٣٣ كَاَنَّهٗ جِمٰلَتٌ صُفْرٌ ○
٣٤ وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ○
٣٥ هٰذَا يَوْمُ لَا يَنْطِقُونَ ○
٣٦ وَلَا يُؤْذَنُ لَهُمْ فَيَعْتَذِرُونَ ○
٣٧ وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ○
٣٨ هٰذَا يَوْمُ الْفَصْلِ جَمَعْنٰكُمْ وَالْاَوَّلِينَ ○
٣٩ فَاِنْ كَانَ لَكُمْ كَيْدٌ فَكِيدُونِ ○
٤٠ وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ○

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# Sura Mursalat
## (Those Sent Forth)
*No. 77 (verses 29-40)*

*29. "(On that Day it will be said unto them:) Depart you to that which you used to deny."*

*30. "Depart to a shadow falling threefold, (stifling smoke from fire)".*

*31. "(Which yields) no relief, nor shelter from the flame".*

*32. "Indeed it throws about sparks (as big) as castles;".*

*33. "As if there were (a string of) yellow camels (marching swiftly)".*

*34. "Ah woe, that Day, to the Rejecters of Truth."*

*35. "This is a day wherein they speak not, (they will not be in a position to put forward any valid defence or plea)",*

*36. "Nor will it be open to them to put forth excuses".*

*37. "Ah woe, that Day, to the Rejecters of Truth".*

*38. "This is the Day of Sorting out (right from wrong). We have brought you and the men of old together".*

*39. "If you have a trick (to flee away from punishment) use it against Me!"*

*40. "Ah woe, that Day, to the Rejecters of Truth".*

### Commentary:

*They Can Neither Defend Themselves Nor Escape.*

The final fate of the rejecters of the Hereafter and the Divine Judgment is stated in these verses: a statement that takes one into deep thought, indeed, because it makes clear the horrors of the Event. The command is:

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*"(On that Day it will be said unto them): Depart you to that which you used to deny".*

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Depart to the blazing fire (Hell) which you used to mock. Depart to the different kinds of punishment which you have prepared for yourselves in your previous life.

The term /inṭaliqū/ is based on /intilāq/ which means: *'to depart, go one's way without stopping, to be free or loose'.*

In fact, it is an explanation of their state in the Hereafter. They will be kept a long time for their account, then, being given leave, they will be told to go to Hell promptly without any pause.

The presenter of the case may be *Allah*, Who commands them directly of the punishment to come, or it may be the angels. The tone of the statement is quite harsh, which is also a kind of torment.

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*"Depart to a shadow falling threefold, (stifling smoke from fire)".*

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A column of smoke falls from above, another from the right side, and the third one from the left side. This black and thick hostile smoke surrounds them to envelop them completely.

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This shadow gives no comfort, nor coolness, since they themselves are from fire, so it says:

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*"(Which yields) no relief, nor shelter from the flame".*

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Some persons may think that a shadow is there which partly reduces the heat of the flames of the fire, but this verse conveys the contrary idea. It suggests that this shadow is not of the kind that you think of, but it is a hot stifling one rising from the thick smoke of fire that reflects the heat of flames, totally.

**Sura Wāqi'ah, No. 56, verses 41-44** attest to the mentioned subject and refer to the companions of the Left Hand:

*"The Companions of the Left Hand – What will be the Companions of the Left Hand?". "(They will be) in the midst of a fierce Blast of Fire and in Boiling Water," "And in the shades of Black Smoke." "Nothing (will there*

*be) to refresh, nor to please*:"

It has been said that the threefold shadow denotes a reflection of their present triple rejection to the principles of religion, i.e. ***monotheism, prophecy,*** and ***Resurrection***; because, rejection of the Resurrection is not separate from the rejection of the other two.

But some others have said that it refers to the triple source of their faculties of anger, carnality, and suspicion. The triple shadows of smoke illustrates the black stains of sins.

The following is the translation of a Persian poem:

**Keep away from anger and carnality,**
**The smoke of which darkens the insight.**
**When anger appears, wisdom disappears;**
**And when lust dominates, the soul is impudent.**

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"***Indeed it throws about sparks (as big) as castles***",

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They are not like the sparks thrown off by a fire in our human world, which are sometimes very tiny.

The term /qaṣr/ ***'castle'*** is meaningfully used here. Perhaps, it is more suitable to say: ***'sparks like the mountains'***. But it should not be forgotten that, as it was mentioned for the verses before, mountains are the origin of many blessings as well as the headsprings of the wholesome sweet water, while castles of the oppressors are the source of blazing hot fire.

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The next verse conveys another form of descriptive explanation for the sparks of this blazing fire: "***As if there were (a string of) yellow camels (marching swiftly)***."

The term /jimālah/ ***'camels'*** is a plural form of /jamal/ ***'camel'***, and the word /ṣufr/ is a plural form of /aṣfar/ which means: ***'that which is yellow'***, because sparks of fire are usually a redish yellow.

In the former verse the sparks, from the point of view of size, were likened to castles and in this verse, from the point of view of

number, colour, and speed, they are likened to a number of yellow marching camels.

When the sparks are so, it is obvious what the blazing fire is! And, besides this, how many other punishments are there nearby?

***Supplication:***

**O Lord! Please protect all of us against it with Your Mercy.**

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At the end of this portion, once more, the same refrain is repeated: *"Ah woe, that Day, to the Rejecters of Truth"*.

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Then another explanation about the characteristics of that terrible Day begins. It says: *"This is a day wherein they speak not, (they will not be in a position to put forward any valid defence or plea)"*.

Yes, it is true that on that Day the sinners will be dumbfounded. This fact is also mentioned in **Sura Yāsīn, No. 36, verse 65**: *"That Day shall We set a seal on their mouths..."*. And, also at the end of the same verse it says: *"...But their hands will speak to Us, and their feet will bear witness to all that they did"*. And even more, in some other verses it is said that their skins will speak and bear witness to what should be said.

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*"Nor will it be open to them to put forth excuses"*.

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They are allowed neither to say anything nor to excuse and defend, because the facts will speak plainly enough, against them, and they do not need to speak. In the human world, this prevaricating tongue misused its freedom: falsely denied the prophets, mocked the righteous, canceled the right, and substituted the wrong in place of the right. So, in the spiritual world this tongue should be locked and shut as a punishment. The very state is a torment, too, because one cannot defend or excuse oneself.

There is a narration from Imam Sādiq *(p.b.u.h.)* in which he says: *"Allah is greater and more just than not to allow His servant to apologize to Him with his plausible excuse. But they have no plausible excuse, indeed, to bring up."* [1]

From some of the verses, of course, it is understood that sinners can speak sometimes in the Hereafter, since, there are many halting places, therein, where some of their tongues are shut and their limbs bear witness, and in some others, their tongues are allowed to express their intensive begrudging, grief, and disaster.

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Again it says: *"Ah woe, that Day, to the Rejecters of Truth".*

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Next, the sinners are addressed. To describe *'that Day'*, it says: *"This is the Day of Sorting out (right from wrong). We have brought you and the men of old together".*

All members of the human race, from the earliest ones to the latest, with no exception, are gathered for reckoning and the Great Judgment.

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*"If you have a trick (to flee away from punishment) use it against Me!"*

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Can you escape from My domain?
Or, are you able to defeat My Power?
Or, can you ransom and redeem yourself?
Or, are you able to deceive the Accountants?
Do your best, but do know that you can do nothing.

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In fact, this is a term used to show their inability and helplessness; the same demand as that which is made for the Holy Qur'an as we can

1 Nūr-uth-Thaqalayn, vol. 5, p. 49.

see in **Sura Baqarah, No. 2, verse 23**: *"And if you are in doubt as to what We have revealed (from time to time) to Our servant, then produce a Sura like it..."*

As Rāqib says in Mufradāt: /kayd/ means *'applying or thinking of a remedy', which is sometimes blameworthy and sometimes praiseworthy, though the former is more frequently used (as it is used in the above verse).*

On that Day, certainly, they can do nothing because, as we know, there is no means for Man, of any kind, to use for his defence, which **Sura Baqarah, No. 2, verse 166** points out: *"...and all relations between them would be cut off"*.

It is interesting to note that, on the one hand, that Day is called *'the Day of Sorting out'* and, on the other hand, it is said that: *"We have brought you and the men of old together"*; both occuring in the same section. At first, all are gathered in the Great Court of Justice, then they are divided into different rows in accordance with their belief and their deeds. Even those who go to Paradise, having different rows of different degrees; the likes of which are those who go to Hell, having different rows with various steps of descent.

Yes, that Day is the day of sorting out (right from wrong, and oppressor from oppressed).

Again, the warning and enlightening verse is repeated: *"Ah woe, that Day, to the Rejecters of Truth"*.

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# Sura Mursalat
## (Those Sent Forth)

*No. 77 (verses 41-50)*

۴۱ اِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِى ظِلٰلٍ وَعُيُونٍ ○

۴۲ وَفَوٰاكِهَ مِمَّا يَشْتَهُونَ ○

۴۳ كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا هَنِيـًٔا بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ○

۴۴ اِنَّا كَذٰلِكَ نَجْزِى الْمُحْسِنِينَ ○

۴۵ وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ○

۴۶ كُلُوا وَتَمَتَّعُوا قَلِيلاً اِنَّكُمْ مُجْرِمُونَ ○

۴۷ وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ○

۴۸ وَاِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ ارْكَعُوا لَا يَرْكَعُونَ ○

۴۹ وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ○

۵۰ فَبِاَىِّ حَدِيثٍ بَعْدَهُ يُؤْمِنُونَ ○

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*41. "The righteous are amidst shades and fountains (of Heaven),"*

*42. "And fruits such as they desire".*

*43. "Eat ye and drink ye pleasantly (until you are satiated) in return for what ye did".*

*44. "Thus do We certainly reward the Doers of Good".*

*45. "Ah woe, that Day, to the Rejecters of Truth".*

*46. "(O ye Unjust!) Eat and enjoy yourselves (on earth) a little while, (but be warned that an evil End in the Hereafter awaits you) for that ye are sinners".*

*47. "Ah woe, that Day, to the Rejecters of Truth".*

*48. "And when it is said unto them: Bow down, they bow not down".*

*49. "Ah woe, That Day, to the Rejecters of Truth".*

*50. "(If they do not believe in Holy Qur'an) then what statement, after that, will they believe in?"*

## Commentary:

***What statement will they believe in, if they do not believe in Holy Qur'an?***

We know that the Qur'anic style generally couples warning with glad tidings, threats with encouragement, and the fate of the Righteous with that of the sinners, so that the affairs are better understood. On this basis, after describing various punishments of the sinners, in the Hereafter, in the aforementioned verses, there follows a short, but meaningful verse about the state of the Righteous on that Day: ***"The righteous are amidst shades and fountains (of Heaven)"***.

Meanwhile, the sinners are in the shade of stifling smoke from fire, as it was understood from the previous verses. The Arabic word /ẓilāl/ ***'shadows'*** is the plural form of /ẓill/ ***'shadow'*** ; whether in the shade of a tree and the like, during the day, or in the shadows of the darkness at night, while /fī'/ is ***'to cast a shadow by only a single source of light'*** such as the shadow of trees which intercepts the rays of the sun.

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Then it says: ***"And fruits such as they desire"***.

It is clear that fruits, shadows, and fountains are a small part of the Blessings that *Allah* will bestow on them: a small part, describable in human language, is in comparison with all the Blessings in Heaven, but so plentiful and beyond the imagination of the Earth's dwellers, that it is indescribable.

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It is interesting to note that they will be entertained so excellently and abundantly at *Allah*'s feast that they are told: ***"Eat ye and drink ye pleasantly (until you are satiated) in return for what you did"***.

The statement which is said to them directly, whether by *Allah* or by Angels, is full of kindness and affection; clearly is a sustenance for their soul.

The phrase, ***"for what you did"***, denotes that these gifts are not given to anyone undeserving, and nothing is obtained by raw claim or imagination but, is actually prepared by good deeds.

As Rāqib cited in Mufradāt: /hanī'/ means anything that is wholesome and has no pain afterward. So, water and the daily meal are thus called and it is sometimes used for life, too.

Therefore, this shows that the fruits, foods and drinks, in Heaven, are not the same as those in this world; of which we sometimes suffer malnutrition, pain and undesirable effects.

Some commentators believe that this imperative sentence denotes to the allowance of using these Blessings, lawfully, while some others believe that this is just a command.

But, on the whole, it should be understood that, at ceremonies, these commands are a kind of hospitality and the host's desire is that the guests would be asked to help themselves, as a kind of respect and dignity shown to them, because he likes that his meal will be eaten completely, by the guests, and this shows that they honour him.

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The next verse emphasizes that these gifts are not underservedly given:

***"Thus do We certainly reward the Doers of Good"***.

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Note that the first verse insists on '*righteousness*' and '*devotion*', then another verse is based on '*deed*', and this verse emphasizes on '*doing good*'.

'*Righteousness*' or '*virtuousness*' means avoidance of any sin, corruption, paganism and the denial of *Allah*; and '*doing good*' is used for any good action; while '*deed*' refers only to the activities which are piously done. So, the blessings bestowed by ***Allah*** are for these groups, not for the false claimants of faith and committers of various kinds of sin, though they appear to be among the faithful people.

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At the end of this part, the refrain is, again, mentioned: "***Ah woe, that Day, to the Rejecters of Truth***".

Woe to those who are deprived of these blessings and affections. The pain of the regret of this deprivation is not minor to the blazing fire of Hell.

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Since being busy with worldly pleasures and the desire of having unconditional freedom for following after carnality, is one of the factors of the denial of Resurrection, the next verse addresses the sinners and in a threatening tone says: "***(O ye Unjust!) Eat and enjoy yourselves (on earth) a little while, (but be warned that an evil End, in the Hereafter, awaits you) for that ye are sinners***".

The term /qalīlā/ *'a little'* can refer either to the short period of life in this world, or to the few blessings of this world in comparison with the countless, immense blessings of the next world.

In fact, the righteous are highly regarded in the Hereafter and are addressed with this affectionate sentence: "***Eat ye and drink ye pleasantly (until you are satiated)...***", but worldly men are addressed with this threatening sentence: "***(O ye Unjust) Eat and enjoy yourselves (on earth) a little while...***".

The Righteous are told: "***...in return for what ye did***", but the unjust are told: "***...for that ye are sinners***".

Further, it makes it clear that it is Man's sin, originating from faithlessness or lusts, that paves the way for *Allah's* punishment.

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Then, the aforementioned warning is followed again by:

***"Ah woe, that Day, to the Rejecters of Truth".***

Woe to those who were deceived by this scintillating world and its lusts, and consequently prepared *Allah's* punishment for themselves.

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In the next verse another source of their disaster, that is: ***'pride and self-conceit'***, is touched on where it says:

***"And when it is said unto them: Bow down, they bow not down".***

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Many of the commentators have said that this verse was revealed about the Thaqīf tribe when the Prophet ***(p.b.u.h.)*** told them to say prayers and they answered that they would never bow; that it would be a disgrace for them. Then he ***(p.b.u.h.)*** said: "***Religion is worthless without bowing and prostration***".

They not only refused bowing and prostration, but also had this quality of pride throughout their life and permeating their ideas. They resigned neither to *Allah's* Will nor to the Prophet's instructions nor to people's rights; they were humble neither to the Creator nor to other human beings. In fact, these two elements, ***'pride and carnality'***, are the most important factors in committing crimes, sins, cruelties, and denial.

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Then, finally, for the tenth time in this Sura, it says:

***"Ah woe, that Day, to the Rejecters of Truth".***

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In the last verse of **Sura Mursalāt**, in a scorning tone and with profound astonishment, it questions:

***"(If they do not believe in Holy Qur'an) then what statement, after that, will the believe in?"***

One who does not believe in Qur'an; that which if it were sent down on a mountain, that mountain would humble itself and cleave asunder for fear of *Allah*, would not resign to believe in any Holy Book or any rational logic, and this is a sign of enmity and obstinacy.

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As it was mentioned, at the beginning of this Sura, the verse: ***"Ah woe, that Day, to the Rejecters of Truth,"*** is repeated ten times for emphasis on one important fact: ***Resurrection***. Repetitions, like this one, are found in the statements of all eloquent speakers for what they want to emphasize on; whether it be prose or verse.

But some commentators believe that each time the verse is repeated, it means that it is about a new subject, and which comes just before the one that the rejecters deny; so, therefore, actually there is no repetition of the verse.

We conclude this Sura with a sentence from 'Rūh-al-Bayān' which says: ***"This Sura was revealed to the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) in a cave somewhere close to 'Qīf Mosque' in Mina and I have seen the cave myself".***

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***Supplication:***

***O Lord! Bestow on us Your Grace not to reject Your verses.***
***O Lord! Protect us against pride and carnal desires; the main sourses of sin.***
***O Lord! Set us in the Bliss of the Righteous among those who will be highly regarded at Your Feast.***

The End

Sura Mursalāt
(Those Sent Forth)

# Notes:

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

# Sura Nabaa (The Great News)

## *No. 78 (40 verses)*

***Contents of the Sura:***

Most of the verses of the last part of the Qur'an were revealed in Mecca. The nature of these Suras is that they put emphasis on the *Creation* and the *Resurrection*, furnished with glad tidings and warnings; usually in a shocking and awakening tone. All the verses of the Suras, except a few, are short and full of implications. For the same reason, they affect, deeply, on any conscious person and they awaken some of the unaware, too. They give spirit to dead-like people and make the indifferent ones feel responsibility. On the whole, they have a specific case and an enthusiastic world of their own, full of enlightenment and attraction.

**Sura Nabaa** is not an exception to this general principle. It begins with an awakening question, and ends with a wonderful sentence full of warning.

The contents of the Sura can be divided into several parts:

1. The question that is stated in the first verse about the *'Great News'* /naba'-in-'aẓīm/ or the *Hereafter*.
2. Examples of the types of Divine Power in the Heavens and on Earth, and also of men's lives and their gifts as evidences to the possibility of the *Resurrection* and the Hereafter.
3. Preliminary signs of the *Resurrection*.
4. Reference to the painful chastisement of the transgressors.
5. The encouraging gifts and blessings of Heaven.
6. Finally, the Sura ends with some intensive warnings about the dreadful punishment, and then, the sad destiny of the Unbelievers.

The name of the Sura, **Nabaa**, is taken from its second verse, but sometimes it is called /'amma/, which is the first word in the first verse.

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### *The Virtue in Studying Sura Nabaa:*

There is a tradition from the Prophet *(p.b.u.h)* which says: "***He who studies Sura Nabaa will be satiated, by Allah, with a cold drink in Heaven***". [1]

Another tradition from Imam Sādiq says: "***He who continues studying Sura Nabaa, everyday, will meet the Holy Shrine at Mecca (Kaaba) before the year ends***". [2]

Again, another tradition from the Prophet *(p.b.u.h)* says: "***He who studies it (Sura Nabaa) and learns it by heart, on the Day of Judgement, his reckoning will be concluded (so quickly) equal to the same length of time it takes to say a single prayer***".

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1 Majma'-al-Bayān, vol. 10, p. 420.

2 Tafsīr-i-Borhān, vol. 4, p. 419.

# Sura Nabaa
## (The Great News)

*No. 78 (verses 1-5)*

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

١ عَمَّ يَتَسَآءَلُوْنَ ○

٢ عَنِ النَّبَاِ الْعَظِيْمِ ○

٣ اَلَّذِى هُمْ فِيْهِ مُخْتَلِفُوْنَ ○

٤ كَلَّا سَيَعْلَمُوْنَ ○

٥ ثُمَّ كَلَّا سَيَعْلَمُوْنَ ○

**In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.**

*1. "O what do they ask (one another)?"*

*2. "Of the Great News,"*

*3. "That in which they differ".*

*4. "Nay! they shall soon (come to) know,"*

*5. "Nay indeed! they shall soon (come to) know".*

### *Commentary:*

***The Great News!***

In the first verse, it astonishingly questions: "***O what do they ask (one another)?***" Then, without expecting them to reply, the Qur'an answers: "***Of the Great News***".

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***"That in which they differ".***

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For the meaning of / naba'-in-'aẓīm /, the commentators have put

forth different ideas. Some of them say it means: '***the Day of Resurrection***' while some others have meant it as '***the revelation of the Holy Qur'an***' and still others have said it means: '***The whole Islamic Principles***'. In some narrations it has been commented on to mean '***vicegerency and guardianship***'; which will be dealt with later.

Paying careful attention to all verses of the Sura, especially to some points in the following verses and specifically to the sentence: "***Verily The Day of Sorting out is (a day) appointed***", which has come after mentioning some Signs of *Allah's* Power in the heavens and on the Earth, and also paying attention to the fact that the most intensive opposition of the Unbelievers was about the existence of '***Resurrection***'; all in all most commentators approve of the first idea, that is, in the sense of '***Resurrection***' for the phrase /naba'-in-'aẓīm/.

As Rāqib says in his book, Mufradāt, the term /naba'/ means: '***a great news which is useful and man is acquainted with it or has a strong conviction to it; and these three things are the conditions of /naba'/***'.

Therefore, the term /'aẓīm/ ***'great'*** is more emphatic and, on the whole, indicates that this news, about which some were doubtful, has been a known fact, great and full of importance, and therefore, its most appropriate meaning is ***'Resurrection'***.

The phrase '***they ask (one another)***' may refer only to the Unbelievers who used to ask each other about the Resurrection; of course, not for their research and comprehension, but, due to their doubts.

It is also probable that the question is from the believers or from the Prophet (***p.b.u.h.***), himself.

Here, a question may arise that: if /naba'-in-'aẓīm/ refers to the ***Resurrection***, which apparently all the disbelievers denied, why does it say "***That in which they differ***"?

To answer this question, we say that: the denial of the ***Resurrection***, in an absolute form, does not decisively exist even among the disbelievers, because many of them assume that there is the existence of the spirit after death, or in other words, '***the spiritual Resurrection***'.

Some of them were doubtful about the bodily Resurrection as in **Sura Naml, No. 27, verse 66**: "***Still less can their knowledge comprehend the Hereafter: nay, they are in doubt and uncertainty regarding***

*it, nay, they are blind thereunto!*". And some of them completely denied the Resurrection and even said that the Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*) was mad, because of his claim about Resurrection; as in **Sura Sabā, No. 34, verse 7-8** : "*The Unbelievers say (in ridicule): Shall we point out to you a man that will tell you, when you are all scattered to pieces in disintegration, that you shall (then be raised) in a New Creation?*". "*Has he invented a falsehood against Allah, or has a spirit (seized) him? Nay, it is those who believe not in the Hereafter, that are in (real) Penalty, and in farthest Error*". Thus, their rejection of the *Resurrection* is certain.

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It further states: "*Nay! they shall soon (come to) know*".

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"*Nay indeed! they shall soon (come to) know*".

When they will be informed, they will cry and will be sorry for themselves; each of them saying: "*Lest the soul should (then) say: Ah! Woe is me! in that I neglected (my Duty) towards Allah,....*"(**Sura Zumar, No. 39, verse 56**).

On the Day that they are surrounded by massive punishment, and they wish to return to their former life, they ask: "*Is there any way (to effect) a return?*" (**Sura Shūrā, No. 42, verse 44.**).

Even when they, being at the point of death, are sure about the partition and *Resurrection*; because all the curtains will be removed, then, and the facts of the next world will become obvious, they cry saying: "*...O my Lord! send me back (to life)*", "*In order that I may work righteousness in the things I neglected...*", (**Sura Mo' minūn, No. 23, verses 99-100**).

The Arabic term /saya' lamūn/ '*they shall soon come to know*', begins with ' س ' ( s ) which is usually used as a sign for near future, and denotes that the Hereafter is near; that this whole life is just a fleeting moment in comparison to it.

Commentators have suggested different ideas about the twice repeated verse, mentioned above, which says the same facts for emphasis: To inform them that the Hereafter is in the near future, or to tell them two separate matters: (1) That they will see the punishment of this world in the near future, and (2) that they will see the next world's punishment after that (of which, the first idea seems more appropriate).

It is also probable that this refers to the improvement and progress of Man's knowledge, when there will be so many reasons and evidences for the possibility of the Resurrection that even the disbelievers cannot afford to deny, but can only confess, the Reality.

However, the fault in this commentary is that this kind of knowledge is for the later generations of Mankind, which this verse refers to, and not for those who used to live at the Prophet's time (*p.b.u.h.*) and differed on the existence of the Hereafter.

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### *Explanation:*

***The proposition of 'Vicegerency' and '/naba'-in-'azīm/ (The Great News)':***

As was mentioned earlier, it has been said that the phrase /naba'-in-'azīm/ has several meanings: '***the Hereafter***, ***the Holy Qur'an***, ***the entire Islamic Principles***', etc. But, the whole concept, taken from the verses altogether, leads us to '***Resurrection***' as having the closest meaning.

There are a lot of narrations, some of which have been cited by the Household of the Prophet ***'Ahlul-Bait'*** (***p.b.u.th***), and some others by Sunni commentators, that say the phrase / naba' - in - 'azīm / refers to Hazrat Ali's *(p.b.u.h.)* vicegerency and Imamat (the leadership of the Islamic community), which is a matter of dispute among a group of Muslims, even today. Or it is interpreted as vicegerency, in general. Three of the narrations are as follows:

1. Hāfiz-Mohammad-ibn-Mo'min - Shīrāzī, one of the scholars of the Sunni Community, has narrated a tradition from the Prophet *(p.b.u.h.)* on the commentary of the first verse of this Sura, and he *(p.b.u.h.)* said: ***"It means the vicegerency of Ali; about which everyone will be asked in the grave, and no one in the East or West, in the seas or over the land passes away without the angels asking him about the vicegerency of Amir-al-Mo'minīn, and he will also be asked what his religion is, who his Prophet is, and who his Imam is".*** [1]

2. Another narration says that on the day of the Battle of Seffīn, a man

1 Risa'lat-ul-I'tiqād, Abū Bakr-Mohammad-ibn-i-Shīrāzī (Based on Ihqāq-ul-Haqq, vol. 4, p. 484)

from the troops of Shām (Damascus), having his armour on and carrying a Qur'an with him, entered the battlefield while he was reciting **Sura Nabaa**. Then Ali *(p.b.u.h.)*, himself, faced him and questioned him: *"Do you know what /naba'-in-'aẓīm/ (the Great News), in which they differ, is?"*

The man replied: *"No, I do not know"*.

Imam Ali *(p.b.u.h.)* said: *"I am, by Allah, the very /naba'-in-'aẓīm/ (the Great News) that you differ in and you quarrel against my vicegerency. You turned away from my vicegerency after you had pledged alligence to it, and only on Dooms Day will you really comprehend, once more, what you had understood about it before"*. [1]

3. A narration from Imam Sādiq says: " *'The Great News' is the same as Vicegerency"*. [2]

To gather the contents of these narrations and the commentary of the verse, in the same sense as *'Resurrection'*, which was previously mentioned, is possible in two ways: (1) The phrase /naba'-in-'aẓīm/ has a broad meaning which includes all of the meanings previously given, though when these verses were revealed the Qur'an insisted on *'Resurrection'* more than anything else. Still, this does not hinder us from finding more interpretations, of the verse, other than the above and (2) as we know and as it has been mentioned repeatedly, the Qur'an has various meanings; that is, a verse may have several meanings, in different dimensions, among which only one is obvious by the apparent words and the other meanings are hidden, but they can be found with the help of other explanations and are not clear to anyone except *'the distinguished ones'*.

This is not the only verse that has obvious and hidden meanings. There are many other verses, in the Holy Qur'an, of which the Islamic narrations contain different commentaries.

But, we emphatically state that it is not possible to understand the hidden meanings of the Qur'an without the clear explanations or commentaries from the Prophet or sinless Imams *(p.b.u.th.)*, and the

1 Tafsīr-i-Borhān, vol. 4, p. 420, Tradition 9.

2 Tafsīr-i-Borhān, vol. 4, p. 419, Tradition 3.

existence of hidden meanings, in the Qur'an, should not be a possible way of misusing it by the mischief-makers who comment on the verses in whatever way they wish.

***Why is the Resurrection emphasized on so much?***

It was mentioned, before, that the most important thing which is emphasized on and spoken about, in the thirtieth part of the Holy Qur'an; whose Suras are mostly Meccan, is the ***Resurrection*** and Man's state in the ***Hereafter.***

This is so because, for the improvement of Man, the first step is to know that there is a ***Reckoning Day.*** And there is a flawless Court in which nothing is hidden from its Judges; a Court where you can find no trangression, no oppressor, and no mistake.

Neither recommendations nor bribes are useful therein. No one can tell a lie or deny the Truth. In short, there is no way to flee from the grip of punishment, there; the only way is staying away from sin, here; in this world.

The belief in there being such a Court shakes Man, awakens the sleeping souls, makes the spirit of piety and responsibility come alive, and invites human beings to be careful of their duties.

Generally, the main factor in the appearance of corruption, in any environment, is one of two following points: (1) the weakness of the watchmen, or (2) the weakness of judicial organization.

If the watchful guards look over the deeds of Man, and careful courts verify the offenders' crimes and let no mischief leave without penalty, then, in such a safe and sound environment, surely inequity, corruption, transgression, and rebellion will decrease to the minimum.

When the worldly life, under the control of its watchmen and courts is so, then Man's divine spiritual life is obvious.

Belief in an Ominipresent Unity that: "***...From whom is not hidden the least little atom....***" (**Sura Sabā, No. 34, verse 3**), and belief in the existence of ***Resurrection***, which according to **Sura Zilzāl, No. 99, verses 7-8**: "***So, whoever has done an atom's weight of good shall behold it!***". "***And whoever has done an atom's weight of evil shall behold it***", nothing will be forgotten and everything will be in front of Man. This kind of belief supplies such a piety in Man that can guide him to the path of charity and goodness throughout his life.

# Sura Nabaa

## (The Great News)

*No. 78 (verses 6-16)*

٦ اَلَمْ نَجْعَلِ الاَرْضَ مِهٰدًا ○

٧ وَّالْجِبَالَ اَوْتَادًا ○

٨ وَخَلَقْنٰكُمْ اَزْوَاجًا ○

٩ وَجَعَلْنَا نَوْمَكُمْ سُبَاتًا ○

١٠ وَجَعَلْنَا اللَّيْلَ لِبَاسًا ○

١١ وَجَعَلْنَا النَّهَارَ مَعَاشًا ○

١٢ وَبَنَيْنَا فَوْقَكُمْ سَبْعًا شِدَادًا ○

١٣ وَجَعَلْنَا سِرَاجًا وَّهَّاجًا ○

١٤ وَاَنْزَلْنَا مِنَ الْمُعْصِرٰتِ مَاۤءً ثَجَّاجًا ○

١٥ لِّنُخْرِجَ بِهٖ حَبًّا وَّنَبَاتًا ○

١٦ وَجَنّٰتٍ اَلْفَافًا ○

*6. "Have We not made the earth as a (wide) expanse?"*

*7. "And the mountains as pegs?"*

*8. "And We created you in pairs,"*

*9. "And We made your sleep for repose,"*

*10. "And We made the night as a covering"*

*11. "And We made the day for (seeking) livelihood,"*

*12. "And We built above you seven firmaments"*

*13. "And We made (therein) a blazing lamp,"*

*14. "And We sent down from the clouds water in abundance "*

*15. "That We may bring forth thereby grain and plants, "*

*16. "And gardens of luxurious growth?"*

***Commentary:***

These verses are, in fact, an answer to the questions of the rejecters of the ***Resurrection***, and those who differ on / naba'-in-'aẓīm / '***the Great News***' since, these verses mention a portion of the wise order of this world of being and its reasonable gifts, which have a very effective function in Man's life. They are, on the one hand, a few of the clear Signs of *Allah's* power over all things; including the rebirth of the dead, and on the other hand, they point to the fact that this Wise order cannot exist in vain since, if with the end of this material world all other things end, too, this life will certainly be in vain.

Thus, these verses can be considered as some reasons for the ***Resurrection*** from two points of view: (1) Through the ***'reasoning of power'***, and (2) through the ***'reasoning of knowledge'***.

In these eleven verses, twelve important blessings are pointed out, mixed with grace and affection and accompanied with reasoning and stimulation of the sentiments. As bare rational reasoning is not quite sufficient, sentiments and affections are needed.

At first, it begins with the earth and says: "***Have We not made the earth a (wide) expanse?***".

The term /mihād/, as Rāqib cites in his book, Mufradāt, means ***'a level and tidy place'***. It is derived from the term /mahd/ ***'a bed, cradle'***. Some commentators and philologists have rendered it to mean ***'bed'***, which is both soft and comfortable.

The use of this term, for the earth, is full of meaning because, on the one hand, most parts of the land are so smooth and level that man can build houses thereon and prepares gardens and farms thereabout.

On the other hand, all his necessities are found over the Earth or hidden on its insides in the form of raw materials and valuable mines.

And, then again, the earth swallows up man's refuse, and the corpse of the dead are burried in it; (because of their dissolution and the absorption of their various microbes in the soil), to be vanished by the wonderful properties of dust.

Furthermore, the Earth, itself, rotates and then rotates around the Sun by which the days and nights and the four seasons of the year appear and these, too, play an important role in Man's life.

In addition, the earth stores up, under its surface, much of the

water that falls down from heaven and then, gradually, distributes it through springs and subterranean canals.

In short, everything useful for the comfort of the creatures living on the land, is supplied on this smooth bed; the Earth. The importance of this great blessing will be made clear only when some slight changes happen to it.

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Then, in order that the importance of the mountains may not be forgotten, in contrast to the smoothness of the surface of the Earth, it says: ***"And the mountains as pegs?"***.

Mountains have deep and expanding formations joined together under the ground. They, armour-like, protect the Earth's surface against the inner pressure caused by the central molten lava, and the outer pressure resulting from the moon.

Also, mountains stand as lofty walls in the way of terrible storms, and as safe abodes for men to rest, therein. If they were not so, Man's life would be quite uncomfortable under the constant strikes of violent storms.

In addition, mountains are the source of sweet water as well as different precious mines.

Adding, still, to all of the above, the mountains' peaks; like gears of a wheel, restrain, by friction, the thick air mass around the globe, as if dragging it along with themselves.

Some scientists say that if the surface of the Earth were a flat plain, then, when the globe turns, the air would slide over it and great storms would develop. This constant turmoil would make the surface too hot and uninhabitable.

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After mentioning these two phenomenal blessings of *Allah*, it refers to the spiritual signs of *Allah* and says: ***"And we created you in pairs"***.

The term /azwāj/ is the plural form of the term /zauj/ which means ***'mate, companion, a couple, and gender (husband or wife)'*** from which not only is a man created and through which his generation survives, but also his spouse is counted as the reason for his spritual tranquility, as **Sura Rum, No. 30, verse 21** says: ***"And among His Signs is this, that***

***He created for you mates from among yourselves, that you may dwell in tranquility with them, and He has put love and mercy between your (hearts)...".***

In other words, the genders (masculine and feminine) are the complement of each other then, they become complete and this makes them a whole.

Since the term / azwāj / also means: ***'kinds, species, and classes'***, some commentators have rendered it to mean: ***'the variations in Man from the point of colour, race, language, different spiritual levels and talents'***; which are signs of *Allah's* greatness and the cause of perfection in societies.

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Then, it refers to ***'sleep'***, a grand divine gift to Man, and says: ***"And We made your sleep for repose,".***

The term /subāt/ is derived from /sabt/ which originally means ***'discontinue, rest'*** and then it was used for the ***'suspension of work'*** for the purpose of resting, and that the term ***'Saturday'*** in the Arabic vocabulary is called /yaum-us-sabt/, because it had been affected by the custom of the Jews who stopped working on Saturday.

Thus, the term /subāt/ narrowly refers to the stopping of most of Man's physical and mental activities when he sleeps. The very temporary stopping of activity causes refreshment and improvement for the tired organs, strengthening the soul and the body, renewing one's pleasure, removing any fatigue and uneasiness, and consequently, making Man ready to start working again.

Though one-third of the human beings' lifetime is occupied by sleep and they have always been entangled with the question of 'dreams', still they wonder about the mysteries of sleep. Even yet, it is not exactly known why that at a special moment the mind fails to work well, the eyelids droop and all the limbs come to a peaceful state.

But, one thing is definitely known and that is: sleep is of great importance to one's health, and that is why psychiatrists try to make their patients' sleep normally and regularly, because it is impossible to cure them without it.

Those who do not sleep enough are pale, withered, nervous, and dull. On the contrary, those who sleep normally, when they rise they

feel, in themselves, much pleasure and vitality.

After a tranquil sleep, study progresses very quickly and mental activity and physical endeavours are often more successful. These facts show the important functional role of sleep in Man's life.

There are few tortures, for a person, that are as painful as compulsory sleeplessness. Experiments have shown that Man's tolerance for lack of sleep is very little and soon he loses his health and becomes sick.

The aforementioned statements about the importance of sleep mean, of course, a balanced sleep, because, over sleeping, like gluttony, is one of the graceless behaviours which causes various sicknesses.

It is interesting that there is not a certain time limit for the natural length of sleep in all persons, but everyone should find the amount of sleep that one needs regarding his physical and mental activities and according to one's own experience.

And stranger still is when human beings are placed in a difficult situation where they must stay awake for a long time. Their perseverance for sleeplessness increases, temporarily, so that sometimes they decrease their sleep to one or two hours, but it has often happened that when the circumstances have changed, Man, both spiritually and bodily, has demanded the recompense of that sleeplessness and has taken it back.

There are, of course, a few rare individuals who are able to go without continuous sleep, for months at a time. In contrast, there are some people who fall asleep even when they are walking on the street or when they are speaking with another person. Surely, this state is very dangerous for them, especially if there would be no one to look after them. Obviously, these kinds of people are sick and sooner or later they will be faced with physical and spiritual difficulties.

In short, this wonderful characteristic, which appears in Man and is called ***'sleep'***, contains many mysteries and is perceived as a ***'miracle'***.

Although the above mentioned verse is about ***'sleep'***, as a divine blessing, it seems that ***death***, and ***wakefulness*** could, also, symbolize ***Resurrection***, so the verse could be a hint to both of them.

Then, again, concerning sleep, it speaks about the blessing of '***night***' and says: "***And We made the night as a covering***".

Following immediately after that, it says: "***And We made the day for***

*(seeking) livelihood*".

Contrary to the dualists (because of being uninformed about the secrets of Creation, where they thought that the light of day is good and the darkness of night is evil and they believed in a separate god, for both of them, while thinking that the former originated from 'God' and the latter from Satan) we should give a bit more thought to it, then we will recognize that both of them are great blessings and are the origin of other blessings, as well.

According to the above verses, the gloom of night is a cloth and covering over the body of the Earth and over all living creatures residing on it. Night, compulsorily, stops the exhausting activities of the life and makes the gloom of darkness, which is actually peace, calmness, and tranquility, dominate over everything in order to give the tired limbs a chance to recover and the gloomy spirit a chance to revive, since a good and quiet sleep is more likely to be obtained in the dark.

Besides this, when night comes, the sunshine disappears. If the sun were to shine continuously, all plants and animals would die from its heat, and the Earth could not be a dwelling place for them.

For the same reason, the Holy Qur'an has frequently emphasized on this matter. Once, it says: *"Say, see you? If Allah were to make the Day perpetual over you to the Day of Judgment, what god is there other than Allah who can give you a Night in which you can rest?..."* (**Sura Qaṣaṣ, No. 28, verse 72**). And after that it adds: *"It is out of His Mercy that He has made for you Night and Day, that you may rest therein, and that you may seek of His Grace..."*, (**Sura Qaṣaṣ, No. 28, verse 73**).

It is noteworthy that, in the Holy Qur'an, many great things have been made oath to, once, but *'night'* has been made oath to seven times, which illustrates the importance of the darkness of night, since we know that an oath is made for important affairs.

Those who make the night bright with artificial light and sit up all nightlong and sleep during the daytime, instead, become rather afflicted and sickly.

People, in villages, who sleep soon, at night, and get up early in the morning, lead healthier lives.

Night has other useful advantages, too. For instance, the period after midnight and before dawn is the best time to pray and supplicate to *Allah* and a very good occasion for self-perfection and devotional

acts as **Sura Zāriyāt, No. 51, verse 18**, about the qualities of the Righteous, says: *"And in the hours (wee hours of the morning) of early dawn, they (were found) praying for forgiveness"*.

The light of the day, too, is a unique blessing. It produces movement, such as, preparing Man for effort and endeavour, and causing the plants and animals to grow under its rays. Then, the above sentence which says: *"And We made the day for (seeking) livelihood"*, is truely so complete and meaningful that it does not need any further explanation.

In conclusion, the duration of the day and night and the precise regularity of their gradual changes, is one of the Signs of *Allah* in ***Creation***. Moreover, it is counted as a natural calendar for the arrangement of Man's life timetable.

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Then, from the Earth our attention is turned to the heavens and it says: *"And We built above you seven firmaments"*.

The number '***seven***', here, may be a multiplication figure which refers to the numerous celestial spheres, groups of systems, galaxies and the different firmaments, in the existing universe, which have a firm nature and are created massive and strong. Or, it may be a figure of quantity in the sense that what we see from the galaxies belongs to the first sky, as **Sura Ṣāffāt, No. 37, verse 6** states: *"We have indeed decked the lower heaven with beauty (in) the stars"*, and beyond that there are six more skies that are far from Man's reach.

It is also probable that the phrase /sab'an šidādā/ '***seven firmaments***' refers to the several layers of the atmosphere surrounding the Earth which, inspite of being apparently transparent, is so dense that it protects Earth from the continually falling meteorites. As soon as one of them enters Earth's atmosphere it becomes hot enough to burn, because of its violent contact with the protecting layers and then it turns to ash and comes down slowly over the land. If this layer of atmosphere did not exist, our cities and farms would be exposed to the invasion of these meteorites day and night.

Some scientists have calculated the denseness of the atmosphere, surrounding the Earth, as being more than one hundred kilometers thick, and equal to a steel ceiling ten meters thick! And this is only one

of the commentaries for the phrase /sab'an šidādā/ *'seven firmaments'*.

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After a short description about the creation of the heavens, attention is paid to the Sun, the great world-illuminating gift, and says: ***"And We made (therein) a blazing lamp"***.

The term /wahhāj/ is based on the term /wahaj/ which means ***'light and heat'*** issuing from fire. Therefore, the term with this sense ***'brightly burning'*** used for the Sun, points to a couple of great blessings that are the origin of all material gifts of this world, that is ***'light'*** and ***'heat'***.

The light of the Sun not only lights Man's surrounding environment and the whole solar system, but also is very effective in the growth of living creatures.

Its heat, in addition to the effect that it directly has on the lives of human beings, animals and plants, is the main cause of the existence of clouds, winds, and rainfall necessary for the irrigation of dry lands.

Because of its ultraviolet rays, the Sun is very useful in destroying microbes. If it were not, generations of living creatures would perish in a short time.

The Sun constantly illuminates the whole world, free of charge, with its warm, bright light and from an appropriate distance. It is neither so hot and burning, nor so cold and dim; and it offers itself to all of us.

If we compare the value of energy, produced by the Sun, with the price of other sources of energy, it adds up to a very large sum. Let us assume that we grew an apple tree with artificial light and energy. Each apple would cost an extraordinary amount. But now, indeed, we receive this worldly productive light, freely, from /sirāj-an-wahhāj/ ***'a blazing lamp'***.

The Sun is the star nearest the Earth, whose mean distance from it is nearly 93,000,000 miles (about 150,000,000 kilometers); its diameter is about 865,000 miles; its mass is about 322,000 times, and its volume more than 1,300,000 times, that of the Earth, and its density is about one-fourth that of the Earth. Its outer heat is about 6,000°C.(10,000°F). (The Kelivin temperature scale uses a degree of which the unit of measurement equals the centigrade degree, but it is numbered from absolute zero, which is -273.16°C.). All of these are arranged, in such a

way, so that if they were a little more or a little less than what they are, it would be impossible for life to exist on the Earth.

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Following the description of the gifts of '***light***' and '***heat***', it speaks of another important matter, about life, which closely relates to the subject of sunshine and says: "***And We sent down from the clouds water in abundance***".

The term /mu'ṣarāt/ is the plural form of the word /mu'sar/ which is based on the term / 'aṣr/ in the sense of '***pressure***' and the term is used with the meaning of '***clouds emitting or pressing out rain***', as if to press itself to pour water.

Some others have said that it means '***the clouds that are ready to rain***', because the form of the word used in Arabic texts denotes to '***readiness for something***'.

Some commentators have said that /mu'sarāt/ is not an adjective for the word '***clouds***', it is an adjective for the word, '***winds***' which press on the clouds from every side in order for it to rain.

The term /θajjāj/ is based on /θajj/ which means '***to pour abundant water, continuously***' and also it is used, here, in the Arabic intensive form. So, on the whole, the meaning of the verse is that: '***We sent down, continuously, abundant water from the clouds emitting rain***'.

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Rain, by itself, has some benefits and merits when it falls: it makes the air fresh, it washes the dirt away, it decreases the heat of the weather; it even moderates the cold weather, it decreases the cause of diseases and it brings Man spirit and joy. But the following verses point to three other great benefits of rain; it says: "***That we may bring forth thereby grain and plants***".

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"***And gardens of luxurious growth***".

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Rāqib cites in his book, Mufradāt, that the term /alfāf/ denotes that the trees of this garden are so thick and entangled that they are joined to each other.

In fact, in those two previous verses, all of the foodstuff that

grows on the land and which men and animals use have been pointed out, because a great part of it is compiled of grains /habbāt/, the vegetables and roots /nabātā/ and, thirdly, fruits /jannāt/.

It is true that in these two verses only three outstanding benefits of rain are mentioned, but its benefits, undoubtedly, are not limited only to these. Seventy percent of Man's bodyweight is made up of water; the main origin of all living creatures, as the Qur'an says: "*...We made from water every living thing...*" (**Sura Anbiyā', No. 21, verse 30**). Therefore, water acts as the essential property in the life of living creatures, especially Man.

Not only Man's body, but also many factories are paralysed without water, and a lot of manufactures would fold, too, without the availability of water.

The beauty and the livelihood of nature is due to water, and the best commercial and economical trade routes, of the world, are waterways.

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***Explanation:***

***The Relation Between These Verses and the Resurrection:***

Through the above eleven verses, the greatest divine gifts and the most basic necessities of Man's life are pointed out, i.e. light, darkness, heat, water, land, and plants.

The statement about this precise regularity, on the one hand, is a clear proof of *Allah's* power over everything. Therefore, there would be no doubt for anyone as to how *Allah* can bring the dead to life again; as the Qur'an says, very clearly, for an answer to the rejecters of the Hereafter: "***Is not He Who created the heavens and the earth able to create the like thereof? Yes indeed! for He is the Creator Supreme, of skill and knowledge (infinite)!***" (**Sura Yā Sīn, No. 36, verse 81**).

On the other hand, this great and lofty establishment certainly has a definite goal, which undoubtedly cannot be construed as the mere '***life of this world***' or being satisfied by simply eating, drinking, and sleeping, but *Allah's* knowledge requires an aim higher than this goal and, in

another sense, the first life is an admonishment for the Next Life, and is a stopover on Man's long journey, as **Sura Mo'minūn, No. 23, verse 115** verifies: ***"Did you then think that We had created you in jest and that you would not be brought back to Us (for account)?"***.

And, too, sleeping and wakefulness can be seen as a kind of death and rebirth, and the dry and dead lands that are revived by falling rains again and again, every year, are before our very eyes the incidents that refer to the ***Resurrection***. They illustrate the ***Hereafter*** and the life after death. **Sura Fātir, No. 35, verse 9** attests to this idea. It, after pointing to the revival of the dead lands by rain, says: "... ***even so (will be) the Resurrection!***".

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# Sura Nabaa
## (The Great News)

*No. 78 (verses 17-20)*

١٧ اِنَّ يَوْمَ الْفَصْلِ كَانَ مِيقٰتًا ○
١٨ يَوْمَ يُنْفَخُ فِى الصُّوْرِ فَتَاْتُوْنَ اَفْوَاجًا ○
١٩ وَفُتِحَتِ السَّمَآءُ فَكَانَتْ اَبْوَابًا ○
٢٠ وَسُيِّرَتِ الْجِبَالُ فَكَانَتْ سَرَابًا ○

*17. "Verily the Day of Sorting out is (a day) appointed,"*
*18. "The Day when the Trumpet shall be blown and you shall come forth in groups".*
*19. "And the heaven shall be opened and become (wide as) gates,"*
*20. "And the mountains shall be set in motion as if they were a mirage".*

**Commentary:**

***Finally, the Promised Day Will Come.***

There were some various evidences for ***Resurrection*** referred to in the previous verses. Here, as a consequence, the first verse says: ***"Verily the Day of Sorting out is (a day) appointed,".***

The phrase /yaum-al-fasl/ '***the Day of Sorting out***' is a very meaningful one which speaks of isolations on that Great Day: The separation of Good from Evil, the separation of the believing good-doers from disbelieving sinners, the isolation of parents from child, and brothers from each other.

The term /mīqāt/ is based on the term /waqt/ ***'time'*** which means ***'an appointed time'***. The certain places, where the pilgrims to Kaaba put on their pilgrimage dress, are called /mīqāt/, because they gather there at an appointed time.

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Then, some of the specialities and the events of that Great Day are detailed: "*The Day when the Trumpet shall be blown and you shall come forth in groups*".

It is well understood, from the verses of the Holy Qur'an, that two great events will happen "*...when the Trumpet shall be blown*". In the first incident, the order of the universe becomes disturbed and all the people, over the earth, and those who are in the heavens will die. In the second case the world will be renewed, the dead will return to life and the *Resurrection* will occur.

The term /nafx/ means *'blow'* and the term /ṣūr/ means *'trumpet'* which is usually sounded for stopping or starting the caravans or troops, and the people, in them, understand this from its two different sounds whether they should stop or start.

This is a delicate point referring to those two great events. And what is said in the above verse, is a hint to the *'second blast'*, when *'the dead are revived and the Resurrection occurs'*.

This verse says that on that Day, "*...you shall come forth in groups*", while **Sura Maryam, No. 19, verse 95** says: "*And every one of them will come to Him singly on the Day of Judgement*" and, also, **Sura Asrā, No. 17, verse 71** says: "*One day We shall call together all human beings with their (respective) Imams...*".

To collect these senses together, we see that '*people being in groups*' is not in contrast with '*every group enters the Resurrection with its respective Imam*'. And '*every one of them will coming singly*' is stated for the reason that there are several stopovers in the Hereafter. People may come in groups with their respective leaders; leading or misleading, at the first halting places, but when they stand before the throne of Justice, they stand individually, or as **Sura Qāf, No. 50, verse 21** says: "*And there will come forth every soul: with each will be an (angel) to drive, and an (angel) to bear witness*".

It is also probable that they come one by one, because they are separated from their friends, partners and supporters. Since, in the Hereafter, everyone is alone with one's own deeds.

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"*And the heaven shall be opened and becomes (wide as) gates*".

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***What are the meanings of 'be opened' and 'gates'?***

Some commentators have said that it means that the doors of the *'unseen world'* will be opened to the *'intuition world'* where the curtains will be removed, thus making the world of angels open to the world of Man.[1]

Some others think that this verse points to what is said in other verses of the Holy Qur'an, such as in **Sura Inshiqāq, No. 84, verse 1** which says: *"When the Sky is rent asunder"*, and on another occasion in relation to the same sense, but using another word it says: *"When The Sky is cleft asunder"* (**Sura Infitār, No. 82, verse 1**).

In fact, there will appear so many clefts in the celestial spheres that it will seem as if they have changed into open gates.

There is another probability that Man, in the present conditions of this world, cannot venture through the heavens, and if it were possible for him to, it would be strictly limited, as if, the present circumstances had shut the gates of the skies to him. But, in the Hereafter, Man will become free from the earthly world and the gate-ways to the heavens will be opened to him, and then the necessary conditions will become available.

In other words, on that Day, the skies will be *'cleft asunder'* and after that new skies and earth will be substituted, as **Sura Ibrāhīm, No. 14, verse 48** says: *"One day the Earth will be changed (into) a different Earth and so will be the heavens..."*. On this occasion the gates of the skies are opened for the earthly men to go through and follow their ways: the righteous go into Heaven whose doors will be opened to them: *"...until behold, they arrive there; its gates will be opened; and its keepers will say: Peace be upon you..."*, (**Sura Zumar, No. 39, verse 73**).

It is in the same place that angels come to them from every door and congratulate them: *"... and angels shall enter unto them from every gate (with the salutation)*, (**Sura Ra'd, No. 13, verse 23**).

And the doors of Hell will be opened to the Unbelievers: *"The Unbelievers will be led to Hell in crowds: until when they arrive there, its gates will be opened..."*, (**Sura Zumar, No. 39, verse 71**).

And, thus, Man arrives in a place where the width is as wide as

1 Al-Mīzān, vol. 20, p. 265 (Farsi Translation).

the phenomenal earth and heavens: *"...and for a garden whose width is that (of the whole) of the heavens and of the earth..."* (**Sura Al-i-'Imrān, No. 3, verse 133**).

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And finally, the next verse, explaining the events of the *Hereafter*, illustrates the status of the mountains and says: *"And the mountains shall vanish as if they were a mirage"*.

As it is understood from all the different verses of the Qur'an about 'the end of the mountains in the Hereafter', that mountains will go through stages: at first they will move: *"And the mountains are in motion"*, (**Sura Ṭūr, No. 52, verse 10**).

Then they will be taken off and crushed: *"...and the earth and mountains are lifted up and crushed with a single blow"*, (**Sura Ḥāqqah, No. 69, verse 14**).

And after that they will be as a poured heap of sand: *"...and the mountains become a slipping heap of sand"*,(**Sura Muzzammil, No. 73, verse 14**).

Then, they will change like fibers of teased or carded wool which can be moved about by the winds: *"And the mountains will be like carded wool"*, (**Sura Al-Qāri'ah, No. 101, verse 5**).

They will turn to dust, then, and scatter about: *"And the mountains shall be crumbled to atoms"*, *"Becoming dust scattered abroad"*, (**Sura Wāqi'ah, No. 56, verses 5-6**).

And finally, as the current verse denotes, there will remain only a trace of them as a mirage.

Thus, mountains will disappear throughout the earth at last, and the land will be level: *"They ask you concerning the Mountains: say, My Lord will uproot them and scatter them as dust"; "He will leave them as plains smooth and level"*, (**Sura Ṭā-Hā, No. 20, verses 105-106**).

The term /sarāb/ is based on the term /sarab/ and means: *'a mirage'*, a deceitful appearance as of water in the desert. Then anything that has an appearance, but is nothing, indeed, is called *'mirage'*.

In fact, the mountains will turn into dust and will be scattered in the air in a state like a mirage. When high solid mountains will have a destiny like this, the state of other changes in the world and, also, the state of people of great authority, in this life, will be obvious there; a

mere mirage.

The following question may arise: Do these events happen with the *'first blast'*, which is the end of this world, or with the *'second blast'*, which is the beginning of the *Resurrection*?

Since the verse "*The Day when the trumpet shall be blown and you shall come forth in groups*" certainly relates to the *'first blast'*, when people survive and arrive at the Hereafter in groups, this verse must be concerned with the same blast, too, but its beginning (the movement of the mountains) may occur with the *'first blast'* and its end (changing as a mirage) with the *'second blast'*.

There is another probability that all the stages of the mountains relate to the first blast, however, since the range of these two blasts are almost close to each other, they are mentioned together, as in some other verses of the Qur'an. The events of the first blast are mentioned with the events of the second blast (as in **Suras Takwīr** and **Infitār**).

It is noteworthy that in the former verses mountains were referred to as *'pegs'* and the earth as a *'cradle'*; but in these verses it is said that on the Day when the order of the destruction of this world will be issued, that cradle will be disturbed and those great pegs will be leveled and, hence, their tangible matter will become decomposed and shattered.

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# Sura Nabaa
## (The Great News)

*No. 78 (verses: 21-30)*

٢١ اِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ كَانَتْ مِرْصَادًا ○

٢٢ لِلطّٰغِينَ مَاٰبًا ○

٢٣ لّٰبِثِينَ فِيهَآ اَحْقَابًا ○

٢٤ لَا يَذُوقُونَ فِيهَا بَرْدًا وَّلَا شَرَابًا ○

٢٥ اِلَّا حَمِيمًا وَّغَسَّاقًا ○

٢٦ جَزَآءً وِّفَاقًا ○

٢٧ اِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا لَا يَرْجُونَ حِسَابًا ○

٢٨ وَكَذَّبُوا بِاٰيَاتِنَا كِذَّابًا ○

٢٩ وَكُلَّ شَىْءٍ اَحْصَيْنَاهُ كِتَابًا ○

٣٠ فَذُوقُوا فَلَنْ نَّزِيدَكُمْ اِلَّا عَذَابًا ○

*21. "Surely Hell lies in ambush".*
*22. "For the trangressors a destination".*
*23. "To abide therein for ages".*
*24. "Nothing cool shall they taste therein, nor any drink".*
*25. "Except a boiling fluid and pus".*
*26. "A fitting recompense (for their evil)".*
*27. "Surely they used not to look forward to the reckoning (for their deeds)".*
*28. "And they rejected Our Signs with strong denial".*
*29. "And everything have We recorded in a book".*
*30. "So taste you (the fruit of your deeds); for no increase shall We grant you, but in punishment".*

### Commentary:

***Hell is a Great Ambush!***

After presenting some of the evidences of Resurrection and a part of its incidents, attention is paid to the destiny of the Unbelievers and says:

***"Surely Hell lies in ambush",***

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***"For the transgressors a destination".***

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***"To abide therein for ages".***

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The term/mirṣād/ is a place-noun which means ***'a place of observation, or of ambush'***. Rāqib cites in his book Mufradāt: ***'/marṣad/ and/mirṣād/ both mean the same thing with a slight difference; that /mirsād/ is called a place that is made especially for an ambush'.***

Some commentators have said that the term is in the Arabic intensive form, with the same sense as that of a person who lies in ambush, continuously. Of course, the first meaning is both more common and more appropriate.

The question of ***'Who is lying in wait, in Hell, for the transgressors?'***, has been answered with ***'the angels of chastisement'***, because according to **Sura Maryam, No. 19, verse 71** the whole of mankind, good or evil, will pass by the fire of Hell or over it, thus: ***"Not one of you but will pass over it: this is with thy Lord, a Decree which must be accomplished"***. In this companion passage, the angels of chastisement are lying in wait to catch the transgressors.

If we comment on the term with the meaning of its Arabic intensive form, Hell is lying in wait and each of the transgressors, who passes by, will be absorbed inside, and in this passage it can be seen that none of them will be safe from fire since, either the angels of chastisement or the intensive absorption of Hell, will capture them.

The term /ma'āb/ means: ***'a place of return'***, and sometimes means: ***'residence'***. It is used, here, with the latter meaning.

The term /aḥqāb/ is the plural form of /huqb/ with the sense of ***'a long space of time'***. The ***'space'*** has been commented on, differently, as to

being *'forty'*, *'seventy'* or *'eighty'* years. In any case, this sense denotes that the transgressors will remain in Hell for a long time, but it will end at last. This contrasts with the verses that denote the eternity of chastisement for them.

The commentators have followed different tracks in commenting on this, for example:

Among the consensus of the commentators, a well-known commentary says that the term /ahqāb/, in this text, means that ***'some long spaces of time will pass one after another without having an end; with each one that passes, another substitutes'***.

In some traditions, it is said that this verse is about those evildoers who will finally be free from the fire, not about those who will be in Hell forever. [1]

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Then, to point to a small part of the great punishments in Hell, it says: ***"Nothing cool shall they taste therein, nor any drink"***.

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***"Except a boiling fluid, and pus"***.

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And also, of course, the thick hot smoke mentioned in **Sura Wāqi'ah, No. 56, verse 43** thus: ***"And in the shades of Black Smoke"***.

The term /ḥamīm/ means ***'a boiling water'*** and the term /qassāq/ means ***'pus'*** flowing from a wound or sore, and some have commented on it to mean ***'bad-smelling fluids'***.

The Righteous, in contrast with them, drink the wholesome pure drinks from the heavenly springs gifted by *Allah*: ***"...and their Lord will give them to drink a Drink, Pure and Holy"***, (**Sura Insān, No. 76, verse 21**). And there are some drinks for them, in nice heavenly containers, which are sealed with musk: ***"Whose seal is musk..."***, (**Sura Mutaffifīn, No. 83, verse 26**). What a contrast between the righteous and evildoers!

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Since these grave and dreadful punishments may seem surprising

1 Tafsīr-i-Nūr-uth-Thaqalayn, vol. 5, p. 494, Tradition 23 and p. 495, Tradition 26.

to some, in addition to this, it says: *"A fitting recompense (for their evil)"*.

And why not? Those who were cruel to the oppressed, in the world, and had no mercy on anyone; tyrannically branding all the hearts and spirits so that it seemed that they burnt their victims, violently, deserve to suffer painful punishments like that and their drinks should, also, be so.

Basically, as we have mentioned repeatedly, it is understood from the verses, of the Qur'an, that at least many of the chastisements in the Hereafter are the incarnation of men's deeds in this world. For instance, **Sura Tahrīm, No. 66, verse 7** says: *"O you Unbelievers! Make no excuses this Day! You are being but requited for all that you did!"* (And now you see them in front of you).

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To explain the cause of these punishments, it says: *"Surely they used not to look forward to the Reckoning (for their deeds)"*.

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And the same carelessness paid to the Reckoning and the Day of Judgment was the cause of their rebellion, tyranny, and cruelty which resulted in this dreadful destiny for them.

In fact, the lack of Faith, about the Reckoning, is a certain cause of rebellion; that which is the cause of those grave chastisements.

The term /lāyarjūn/ is derived from /rajā '/ which means both *'hope'* and *'lack of fear and terror'*. In principle, when one hopes and expects a penalty, naturally he fears, and if he does not expect it, he does not dread it, and these two correlate with each other. Then, those who do not have hope in the Reckoning do not fear, either.

The term /inna/ shows emphasis; the term /kānū/ is a sign for the past continuous tense; the term / hisābā/ which has been used in an indefinite form, here, after the negative sign of / lā/, means *'reckoning'* and in general, all point to the fact that they, the transgressors, never expected any ***Reckoning*** or the ***Record***, at all. Or, in other words, they had forgotten about the ***Day of Judgement*** and they left no room for it in their lives. It is natural that such persons who become the doers of any great evil and sin will finally be involved in these painful punishments.

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*"And they rejected Our Signs with strong denial".*

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Their low desires had become so strong in them that they denied all the Signs of *Allah* in order to continue going astray and accomplish their unlawful wishes.

It is obvious that these verses carry some broad meanings, so that they include the verses consisting of the unity of *Allah*, prophecy, divine legislation, creation, the prophets' miracles, precepts, and traditions. And, regarding the denial of the extensive Divine Signs and evidences, that have covered the world of creation and divine legislation, we should accept the punishment for these people as ***'a fitting recompense'*** and just penalty.

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Then, as a warning to these rebels and, also, for the emphasis on the balance of ***'sin'*** and ***'penalty'***, and the authority of a fitting recompense (for their evil), it says: ***"And everything have We recorded in a book"***.

We accept this warning so that we, therefore, would not imagine that something of our deeds will be left unrecorded and that we will not be punished for it, and also, that we would never consider the painful punishments as unjust.

Many of the verses, of the Qur'an, certify the fact that all of Man's deeds, irrespective of small or great, apparent or hidden, and even intentions and beliefs, are recorded.

Once it says: ***"All that they do is noted in (their) Books (of Deeds)": "Every matter, small and great, is on record"***, (**Sura Qamar, No. 54, verses 52-53**).

Another time it says: ***"...Verily, Our messengers record all the plots that you make!"*** (**Sura Yunus, No. 10, verse 21**).

In addition, it says: ***"...and We record that which they send before and that which they leave behind..."*** (**Sura Ya-Sin, No. 36, verse 12**).

And then, when the records of the evildoers will be handed to them, they will cry saying: ***"Ah! Woe to us! What a book is this! It leaves out nothing small or great, but takes account thereof!"*** (**Sura Kahf, No. 18, verse 49**).

Undoubtedly, the person who believes in this fact with all his heart, will be very careful in his deeds and the very belief creates a lofty wall between him and sin and is counted as one of the important factors, effective in good training.

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In the last verse, of this portion under discussion, the style of speaking is changed from the third person to the second person, addressing them directly and in a threatening tone: "***So taste you (the fruit of your deeds); for no increase shall We grant you, but in punishment***".

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Whatever you cry, whenever you say '***Ah woe to us***', or ask to return to the world to do good instead of evil; all are in vain and you gain nothing, but your punishment.

This is the penalty of those who, when they were faced with the Prophets' kind invitation to faith and piety, used to say: "***It is the same to us whether you admonish us or be not among (our) admonishers!***" (**Sura Shu'arā', No. 26, verse 136**).

And again, this is the penalty of those who, when the messages of *Allah*, are recited get nothing from it: "***... but it only increases their flight (from the Truth)!***" (**Sura Banī Isrā'īl, No. 17, verse 41**).

And finally, this is the penalty of those who avoided no sin and were fond of no act of charity.

It is narrated that the Prophet ***(p.b.u.h.)*** said: "***This verse is the most intensive one in the Qur'an about those who deserve Hell***". [1]

Why shouldn't it be so!? When the Merciful and Beneficent *Allah* addresses them with wrath and says: "***...for no increase shall We grant you, but in punishment***", to make them completely hopeless.

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1 Tafsīr-i-Kashshāf, vol. 4, p. 690 and Rūh-al-Bayān, vol. 10, p. 307.

# Sura Nabaa
## (The Great News)

*No. 78 (verses 31-37)*

٣١ اِنَّ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ مَفَازًا ○
٣٢ حَدَآئِقَ وَاَعْنَابًا ○
٣٣ وَكَوَاعِبَ اَتْرَابًا ○
٣٤ وَكَاْسًا دِهَاقًا ○
٣٥ لَا يَسْمَعُونَ فِيهَا لَغْوًا وَلَا كِذّٰبًا ○
٣٦ جَزَآءً مِنْ رَبِّكَ عَطَآءً حِسَابًا ○
٣٧ رَبِّ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا الرَّحْمٰنِ
لَا يَمْلِكُونَ مِنْهُ خِطَابًا ○

*31. "Surely for the Righteous there is a victory,"*

*32. "Gardens enclosed and vineyards"*

*33. "And comely maidens, with the freshness of youth, equals in age".*

*34. "And a cup overflowing".*

*35. "No Vanity shall they hear therein, nor Untruth,"*

*36. "A reward from your Lord, an award sufficing,"*

*37. "Lord of the heavens and the earth and all between the two, the All-merciful, with Whom none shall have power to argue".*

### Commentary:

*Some Great Rewards for the Righteous.*

The former verses were about the destiny of the rebels and about some of their painful punishments and the causes of their rebellion. The following verses are about the opposite group; the true believers, the Righteous, and some of their rewards in the Hereafter: compare

them with each other so that the facts can be understood more clearly. This is the style, in the Qur'an, which sets the opponents facing each other and makes their state clear by showing the contrasts in their positions.

At first, it says: ***"Surely for the Righteous there is a victory"***.

The term /mafāz/ is a place-noun which is derived from /fauz/ in the sense of ***'gaining goodness safely'*** and also means: ***'salvation and victory'*** which is necessary for ***'gaining the goodness safely'***. Regarding the term /mafāz/, which is used in an indefinite form in this text, it means ***'gaining a very great victory and salvation'***.

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Then, describing this felicity and salvation, it says: ***"Gardens enclosed and vineyards"***.

The term /ḥadā'iq/ is the plural form of /ḥadīqah/ which is a garden planted with trees surrounded by a wall. Rāqib cites in his book, Mufradāt, that /ḥadīqah/ originally means: ***'a piece of land containing water for irrigation'***, like /ḥadaqah/, ***'the eye-socket'***, where water exists, continuously, for lubricating the eye.

It is interesting to note that, among all the fruits, grapes are emphasized on, here, because of their extra advantages in comparison with the other fruits. Since, according to statements of the scientists of nutrition, grapes are not only a complete food, from the point of their nutritive value, but are, also, counted as an article of foodstuff closely similar in comparison to mothers' milk. They produce calories, in the body, twice as much as meat does. Grapes have so many useful properties that they could be called ***'a natural pharmacy'***.

Further to this, they possess the characteristic of being antitoxins; useful in blood purification. They work as a remedy for rheumatism and gout, and are a factor in controlling the level of nitrogen in the blood.

In addition to these, grapes strengthen the nerves, bring happiness, and because of containing different kinds of vitamins, make man able-bodied and powerful.

These are only a few of the qualities of grapes. And hence, it has been related that the Prophet ***(p.b.u.h.)*** has said: ***"Grapes are your best fruits"***.

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Then, referring to another gift, in Heaven, for the Righteous, it says: ***"And comely maidens, with the freshness of youth, equals in age"***.

The term /kawā'ib/ is the plural form of / kā'ib/ which means ***'a damsel entering puberty'*** which illustrates their prime youth. And the term /atrāb/ is the plural form of /tirb/ which means ***'persons of the same age'***, which is used mostly for the feminine gender. Some others have said that the term is originally based on / tarā'ib/ meaning: ***'ribs of the chest'***, which are very similar to each other.

It is probable that the maidens of Heaven, themselves, are ***'equals in age'***, or they are ***'equals in age'*** with the wives of the Righteous, for only by this standard can complete sympathy and understanding be figured. However, the first commentary seems more appropriate.

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Then, the fourth gift, allocated to the Righteous, is mentioned: ***"And a cup overflowing"***.

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It is not a drink like the worldly wine; which is filthy and makes man drunk, unconcious and descends him lower than the lowly animals, but it is a drink that increases the wisdom and refreshes the spirit and soul.

The term /ka's/ means ***'a cup full of drink'***, and it sometimes means the container, itself.

The term /dihāq/ is rendered as ***'overflowing'*** by many commentators and phylologists, but in ***'Lisān-ul-Arab'*** by Ibn-i-Manzūr, two more meanings are cited for it: ***'successive(ly), repeated(ly) '*** and ***'limpid, clear'***.

Therefore, if we consider all these senses, the verse means: ***'in Heaven, overflowing cups of pure, limpid drink are brought, repeatedly, for the Righteous'***.

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In speaking about ***'cup'*** and ***'drink'*** reference is made to the disgusting association of the two in this world, while the heavenly drink is just the opposite to that devilish worldly wine. Subsequently, the next verse says: ***"No Vanity shall they hear there, nor Untruth"***.

Two probabilities are suggested regarding the pronoun in /fihā/ and as to which noun it refers to. The first says it refers to ***'Heaven'*** and the second, that it refers to ***'cup'***.

According to the first commentary the verse means that: *'they hear no foolishness or falsehood in Heaven'*, as was said in **Sura Qāshiya, No.88, verses 10-11**: *"In a Garden on high"*, *"Where they shall hear no (word) of vanity"*.

And, according to the second commentary the verse means: *'there will not appear any deceit or worthlessness as a result of having that cup of drink'*, as was said in **Sura Tur, No. 52, verse 23**: *"They shall there exchange, one with another, a (loving) cup free of frivolity, free of all taint of ill"*.

In any case, one of the great spiritual bounties for the Righteous, in Heaven, is that they hear no vanity, no falsehood, no slander, no rejection of the truth, no justification of the unjust, and no worthless talk such as are usually associated with this earthly world which is indulged in by some corrupted people and causes pain to the hearts of the Righteous. Verily, how nice and comfortable the environment where this kind of unbecoming speech is not found therein, and according to **Sura Maryam, No. 19, verse 62**: *"They will not there hear any vain discourse, but only salutations of Peace:..."*.

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In counting the bounties in Heaven, for the Righteous, a spiritual gift is mentioned, at the end, which excells the others and says: *"A reward from your Lord, an award sufficing"*.

What blessing and reward can be better and has a higher standard than that of a powerless servant, favoured with the grace and love of his Great, Gracious Lord. *Allah* rewards him, honours him, and gives him a liberal and bountiful gift. This is the true Salvation, which is so delightful for the Righteous that no other blessing can match it.

The term /rabb/ *'Lord'* followed by /ka/, the second person singular pronoun (addressee), together with the term /'atā'/ *'an award'* are all signs of His superior favour which are involved in these rewards.

The term /hisābā/, according to many commentators, means *'sufficient'*, like /hasbi/ *'enough'*.

A tradition from Hazrat Ali *(p.b.u.h.)* says that in the *Hereafter Allah* takes careful count of each good deed, of the Believers, and awards them, for every good deed, ten to seven hundred times more, as he has cited from the Qur'an: *"A reward from your Lord, an award*

***sufficing***".[1]

It is understood from this narration that though *Allah's* rewards are paid out generously or bountifully as awards, they are based on the account of good deeds, i.e. His awards are in proportion with men's good deeds. Hence, the term /hisābā/, in the above verse, can be commented on by its common meaning: ***'account'***. This meaning and the previous meaning, then, can be used interchangeably.

Then, in the last verse of this part, it says: "***Lord of the heavens and the earth and all between the two, the All-merciful,...***".

Truly, the One Who is the owner of the great universe, and is its Creator, too, Whose Grace is seen everywhere and covers everyone, does, indeed, award the Righteous, abundantly, in the ***Hereafter***.

This verse, without doubt, points to the fact that if *Allah* promises the Righteous such rewards, then a small part of it; in the form of His general Grace, has been shown to those in the heavens as well as to those on the earth in this world.

And at the end of the verse, it says: "***... with Whom none shall have power to argue***".

The pronoun of the term /lāyamlikūn/, ***'none shall have'***, may refer to all creatures in the heavens and on the earth, or to all the Righteous and the rebels gathered in the ***Hereafter*** for the ***Reckoning*** and recompense. Whichever it may be, it points to this fact, that on that Day no one has the right to protest against the ***Record***, because it is so precise and the recompense so just that no one can say anything.

Besides, no one has the right to offer intercession, but by *Allah's* leave: "***... Who is there can intercede in His presence except as He permitteth?...***", (**Sura Baqarah, No. 2, verse 255**).

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1 Nūr-uth-Thaqalayn, vol. 5, p. 495, Tradition 29.

***Explanation:***

***The Rewards of the Righteous and the Recompense of the Rebels:***

There is an interesting comparison between the rewards of the Righteous, in these verses, and the chastisement of the disbelieving rebels in the former verses.

The contrast is between /mafāz/ ***'a place of salvation'*** for the Righteous and /mersād/ ***'a place of ambush'***.

The Upriqht will have and enjoy ***'gardens enclosed, and vineyards'***, but the transgressors will have fire ***'to abide therein for ages'***.

The Righteous are awarded ***'pure drinks'*** in ***'cups overflowing'***, but the evildoers are recompensed ***'a boiling fluid and pus'***.

The Righteous, are ***'awarded sufficingly'*** by *Allah*; the All-merciful, but the rejectors receive ***'a fitting recompense'*** from Him; the Just.

The rewards are increased for the Righteous, but there is an increase of punishment for the rebels.

In short, these two groups are in contrast with each other in every respect, because they are different from the point of belief and action.

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***The Pure Drinks in Heaven.***

In different verses of the Holy Qur'an, the heavenly drinks are well-defined and specified. Studying these verses shows that those who drink these drinks attain such an ecstasy that no human language can describe it.

In **Sura Insān, No. 76, verse 21** the drink is characterized as 'pure drink': " ***And their Lord will give to them to drink of a Drink, Pure and Holy***".

On some other occasions it is emphasized that this clear white drink is a drink that brings no headiness nor intoxication: "***Round will be passed to them a Cup from a clear-flowing fountain***", "***Crystal-white, of a taste delicious to those who drink (thereof)***", " ***Free from headiness; nor will they suffer intoxication therefrom***",(**Sura Sāffāt, No. 37, verses 45-47**).

And in another Sura it says: "***Verily, the Righteous drink of a cup;***

*the mixture of which is (like) camphor*", (**Sura Insān, No. 76, verse 5**).

Also, it says: "*And they will be given to drink there of a cup (of pure drink) mixed with Zanjabeel (ginger)*", (**Sura Insān, No. 76, verse 17**).

In the current verse, it says: "*And a cup overflowing*".

But most important is that it is *Allah* Who offers and serves them the drinks with His Favour and Grace: "*...and their Lord will give to them to drink...,*" (**Sura Insān, No. 76, verse 21**).

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**Supplication:**

***O Lord! We pray that You will give us the pure drink, also.***

# Sura Nabaa
## (The Great News)

*No. 78 (Verses 38-40)*

٣٨ يَوْمَ يَقُومُ الرُّوحُ وَالْمَلَآئِكَةُ صَفًّا لَّا يَتَكَلَّمُونَ إِلَّا
مَنْ أَذِنَ لَهُ الرَّحْمَٰنُ وَقَالَ صَوَابًا ○
٣٩ ذَٰلِكَ الْيَوْمُ الْحَقُّ فَمَن شَاءَ اتَّخَذَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِ مَآبًا ○
٤٠ إِنَّا أَنذَرْنَاكُمْ عَذَابًا قَرِيبًا يَوْمَ يَنظُرُ الْمَرْءُ
مَا قَدَّمَتْ يَدَاهُ وَيَقُولُ الْكَافِرُ يَا لَيْتَنِي كُنتُ تُرَابًا ○

*38. "The Day on which the Spirit and the angels shall stand arrayed, they shall speak not except whom the All-merciful gives leave, and (who) speaks what is right".*

*39. "That Day is certain; whoever then desires may take refuge with his Lord".*

*40. "Surely We have warned you of a Punishment near, the Day when man shall see what his two hands have sent forth and the Unbeliever shall say: O! would that I were dust".*

### Commentary:

*The Unbeliever shall say: "O! would that I were dust".*

A noticeable part of the chastisement for the transgressors and the reward for the Righteous, on Dooms Day, were mentioned in the previous verses.

Verses 38 to 40 introduce *'That Great Day'*, and expound on some of its events, by saying: *"The Day on which the Spirit and the angels shall stand arrayed, they shall speak not except whom the All-merciful gives leave, and (who) speaks what is right".*

Undoubtedly, the act of the Spirit and the angels on that Day; *'to stand arrayed and speak not except those whom the All-merciful gives leave'*, is only because of their obedience to Him. In this world, too, they fulfill His Will and serve His commands. Of course, their fulfillment, in that world, will be more apparent, more clear and more extensive.

What does *'the Spirit'* mean, here? Commentators have yielded several interpretations for it, some of which, extend to eight probabilities. The following meanings are the most important ones: [1]

1. *'The Spirit'* is a creature other than the angels and greater than all of them.
2. *'The Spirit'* is the angel Gabriel who is the greatest angel because he is charged, especially, with bringing Messages from *Allah* to the human Apostles.
3. *'The Spirit'* may be the souls of men, collectively, that rise with the angels.
4. *'The Spirit'* is an angel of the highest standard, higher than all angels, and greater than Gabriel. It is the very angel who was with all prophets and the sinless Imams *(p.b.u.th.)* and remains so.

It is noteworthy that, in the Qur'an, *'the Spirit'* is sometimes simply mentioned alone and without any definition. In this case, it is often equivalent to the angels, as in this verse: *"The angels and the Spirit ascend unto Him..."*, (**Sura Ma'ārij, No. 70, verse 4**).

Or; *"The angels and the Spirit descend therein by their Lord's leave for every affair"*, (**Sura Qadr, No. 97, verse 4**).

In these two verses, *'the Spirit'* is mentioned after *'the angels'*, and in the current verse it is mentioned before *'the angels'*, therefore, it may indicate the greatness of a distinguished one.

But in many verses of the Qur'an *'the Spirit'* is mentioned with something else or with a specification. For example, / rūh-ul-qudus/ *'Holy Spirit'* in **Sura Nahl, No. 16, verse 102** says: *"Say, The Holy Spirit has brought the revelation from thy Lord in Truth...,"* or /rūh-ul-amīn/ *'the Spirit of Faith and Truth'* in **Sura Shu'āraa, No. 26, verse 193** says: *"With it came down the Spirit of Faith and Truth"*.

1 Qartabī, The Commentary, vol. 10, p. 6977.

In some verses *Allah* designates the word *'Spirit'* for *Himself* as in the following: *"...and breathed into him of My spirit..."*, (**Sura Al-Hijr, No. 15, verse 29**). And in another verse it says: *"...Then We sent to her Our spirit..."*,(**Sura Maryam, No. 19, verse 17**).

It seems that the term *'Spirit'*, which is stated differently in these verses, may have different meanings whose explanations are stated, appropriately, under each of them in the commentary.

But, among these various commentaries, what seems the most fitting, to the current verse, is that *'the Spirit'*, here, refers to one of the great angels of *Allah* that, according to some narrations, is even higher than Gabriel, as a tradition from Imam Sādiq *(p.b.u.h.)* says: *"He is an angel greater than Gabriel and Michael"*. [1]

And, it is cited in Ali-ibn-Ibrāhīm's commentary that: *" 'The Spirit' is an angel, greater than Gabriel and Michael, and he was with the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) as well as with the Imams"*. [2]

Although in some narrations quoting Ahlul-Bait, it is cited that the Prophet *(p.b.u.h.)* has said: *" The Spirit is an army from Allah's armies, who are not angels and have a head, hands and feet "* and, then, he *(p.b.u.h.)* recited: *" The Day on which the Spirit and the angels shall stand arrayed "*, and said: *" These are an army and those are of another army. "* [3].

In any case, as it was pointed out earlier, the great creature of *Allah's*, whether it be among the angels or is another kind of creature, will be with the angels in the *Hereafter*; all of them ready to obey *Allah's* command.

In the *Hereafter*, everyone is so terrified that no one is able to say a word or offer intercession except by *Allah's* leave. They praise Him, or intercede, as He permits, only for those who are deserving.

It is cited, in a narration, that once Imam Sādiq *(p.b.u.h.)* was asked about this verse and he said: *"By Allah, on the Day of Judgement, we will be given leave for them and we will speak"*.

The narrator asked him *(p.b.u.h.)* what he would say on that Day, and he answered: *"We praise our Lord, and send blessings on our Prophet,*

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1 Majma'-al-Bayān, vol. 10, p. 427.

2 Tafsīr-i-Ali-ibn-Ibrāhīm, vol. 2, p. 402.

3 Durr-al-Manthūr, vol. 6, p. 309.

***and intercede for our followers and our Lord does not refuse us***".[1]

It is understood from this narration that on the Day of Judgement the Prophets and the sinless Imams will be in the row of angels and ***'the Spirit'*** who will be given leave to speak will praise *Allah* and intercede.

The term /sāwab/ ***'what is right'*** is an evidence that angels, the Spirit, prophets, and Saints will intercede for those who are deserving and their intercession will not be undue.

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Then, it points to that Great Day which is the Day of resurrection for both men and angels, as well as ***The Day of Judgement*** for the transgressors, where they will be given their recompense, and the Righteous will be rewarded, and it says: "***That Day is certain***".

The term /ḥaqq/ means: ***'a thing that surely happens'*** and ***'that which is right and proper, just and true'***. This meaning is completely right for the Dooms Day, where the rights of everyone will be given to him; the oppressed's rights will be taken from the oppressors, the ***'rights'*** and ***'the hidden secrets'*** will be manifested, and hence, it will be ***'right'*** in all respects.

Since recognition of this fact can be the most effective motive for men to move towards the path of *Allah* and obeying him, then immediately after the previous sentence, in this verse, it says: "***...whoever then desires may take refuge with his Lord***".

That is, all the means of this divine motion are prepared: right and wrong have been introduced; prophets have said enough about the Truth and Divine Reality; wisdom, which is an inner apostle, has clearly defined the end of the transgressors and the Righteous, and the court, the Judge, and the Judgement have been known. The only remaining thing is Man's firm decision that should be made with free-will; which *Allah* has bestowed on him, to go forth on the right path.

The term /ma' āb/ means ***'a place of return'*** and it is also cited with the sense of ***'road'*** and ***'way'***.

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Then, as an emphasis on the sinners' punishment, and as a warning to those who think that the ***Great Day*** is very far from them or

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1 Majma'-al-Bayān, vol. 10, p. 427.

it is on credit, stating that it is very near it says: *"Surely We have warned you of a punishment near..."*

The life of this world, however long it may be, is as a mere moment in comparison with the life of the Next World. According to an Arab proverb: *'Everything that is certain to come, is near'*. Then, for the same reason, *Allah*, in **Sura Ma'ārij, No. 70, verses 5-7** tells His prophet: *"Therefore do thou hold patience, a patience of beautiful (contentment)". "They see the (Day) indeed as a far-off (event)": "But We see it (quite) near"*.

Amir-al-Mo mineen Ali *(p.b.u.h.)*, also in this regard, says: *"Whatever is certain to come, is near"*. [1]

It is near because the main source of men's divine chastisement is their own deeds, which are always with them as we see from **Sura 'Ankabūt, No. 29, verse 54**: *"...and most surely hell encompasses the unbelievers"*.

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Since on that Day a great number of people, being full of grief and sorrow, will be regretful of their actions, which, then, of course, will be quite useless. Following that warning, it says: *"...the Day when man shall see what his two hands have sent forth, and the Unbeliever shall say: O! would that I were dust"*.

Some commentators have considered the term /yanẓur/, in the same sense of /yantaẓir/, that is: *'on that Day, men will wait for the recompense of their deeds'*.

And some others have considered it to mean: *'looking at the Record and observing the good and evil actions'*.

And it has also been construed as meaning: *'to see the reward and the penalty of the deeds'*.

These commentaries originate from the idea that they have paid little attention to the existence of the embodiment of Man's deed, on that Day, otherwise, the meaning of the verse is clear and no interpretation would be needed.

From the different verses of the Qur'an and Islamic narrations, it is understood that on that Day the deeds of Man will be personified in

1 Nahj-ul-Balāqa, Sermon No. 103 (Arabic Version), Sermon No. 106 (English Version).

some appropriate forms and will appear in front of him. In fact, he will truly see his own deeds, himself, and when he observes his evil actions he will be both sorry and regretful, and when he observes his good actions he will be happy and delighted. As a matter of fact, one of the best rewards for the Righteous, and one of the worst punishments for the evildoers is the very personification and incarnation of their deeds, which will follow them everywhere.

**Sura Kahf, No. 18, verse 49** says: "*...they will find all that they did, placed before them...*". And **Sura Zilzāl, No. 99, verses 7-8** say: "*So, whoever has done an atom's weight of good shall behold it*". "*And whoever has done an atom's weight of evil shall behold it*".

So, these are some of the wonders of the *Hereafter* that the deeds of Man will be personified and the powers will be changed into a tangible substance and become a living thing.

The sentence /māqaddamat yadāhu/ *'what his two hands have sent forth'*, is so stated because, Man usually does most of his actions with his hands, but, surely they are not limited only to those actions which are performed by the hands. The actions which are done by the tongue, eyes, and ears are included, too.

Verse 40, of this Sura, has warned us about the matter before we reach that Day and it says: "*...And let every soul look at what (provision) he has sent forth for the morrow.*".

When the disbelievers see the deeds of their lifetime in front of them, they will be so sorry that they will say: *'O! would that I were dust'*, and from it would never have been created as a human being.

Of course, they know that dust is better than themselves, because dust is not only harmless but also useful for all: it takes a single grain and makes a return of sometimes more than one hundred plants, instead. But humans have been the source of corruption in different forms.

In some verses of the Qur'an it is said that when the Unbelievers and the sinners see the *Hereafter* and the throne of Divine Judgement, therein, and the recompense of their deeds, they will react differently, all of which relates to the intensive grief they have.

Sometimes, they say: "*...Ah! woe is me! in that I neglected (my duty) towards Allah*".

And sometimes they say: "*Now then send us back (to the world): we*

*will work righteousness: for we do indeed (now) believe*".

And further still they say: "***Would that I were dust!***", which was discussed in the current Sura.

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### *The Clear Solution for Fatalism and Free-will:*

This controversy is one of the oldest cases which has been discussed among the scholars, some of whom believed in Man's free-will and some in another philosophy; each have stated some reasons to prove their ideas.

It is interesting to note that the fatalists and those adherents to the idea of *'free-will'* have both approved the principle of free-will, in practice, and have accepted it. In other words, their scientific conflicts are bound only to the circle of their discussions and not in practice. This clearly shows that the principle of free-will exists in the nature of all men, and by refusing the various temptations, everyone agrees with the principle of free-will.

One of the most clear evidences to free-will is the common conscience or the general nature of men that appears in Man's life in different forms. Since, if Man thought that deeds were obligations and did not believe in free-will, then why:

1. Do they sometimes repent of their behaviour, for what they have done, or the actions they have not done, and decide to take benefit from their former experiences in their future conduct?
2. Condemn the evildoers. If they are obliged why are they scorned?
3. Are the good doers praised?
4. Do people try to train their children, so that they can gain felicity and be happy. If all are obliged, what is the use of training?
5. Do all the scientists, without exception, try to increase the standard of morals in societies? Why?
6. Does Man repent of his errors? If the principle of fatalism is accepted, what does 'penitence' mean?
7. Does Man become sorry about his negligences in carrying out his duties? Why?
8. Are criminals and evildoers, all over the world, strictly interrogated and tried in courts? The action beyond the limit of Man's

Will does not need interrogation and trial.

9. Throughout the world and among all sects, whether they are polytheist or materialist, do they believe in punishment for criminals? Then, is it a penalty for the deed that they were obliged to do?

10. Do even the fatalists, when their interests and honour is violated by someone, protest and call him as an offender in the court?

In short, truly, if Man is not free in Will, then why should he have feelings of regret?

What is blame and scorn? Can a person whose hand is trembling, unwillingly, be blamed?

Why are the good doers praised? Do they have a free will of their own to continue doing good?

In fact, when the effect of training and education is accepted, fatalism will be meaningless.

Besides, morals, without assuming free-will, have no sense at all.

If we are obliged to do things, what is the meaning of repentance? What is regreting for? Then, the trial of an obliged person is the most cruel thing, and punishing him is worse than that.

All these point to the fact that the principle of *'free-will'* is in human nature and it fits in with the general conscience of mankind. Not only the common people, but also all special classes and all philosophers are like that in their deeds, and then, even fatalists are actually free in Will.

It is an interesting fact that the Qur'an has frequently emphasized on this situation. It says: "*...whoever then desires may take refuge with his Lord*". Not only in these verses, but also in many other verses of the Qur'an, stress has been put on Man's Will, however, to discuss this, here, will deviate us from our topic of discussion, so, suffice it to mention only three of them, thus:

" *Surely We guided him to the way: whether he be grateful or ungrateful (is up to him)*" (**Sura Insān, No. 76, verse 3**).

"*Let him who will, believe, and let him who will, reject (it)*", (**Sura Kahf, No. 18, verse 29**).

"*Surely this is an admonishment, that whosoever will, (taking this straight way) may choose a path unto his Lord*", (**Sura Insān, No. 76, verse 29**).

Discussing fatalism and free-will is very time consuming and many books and articles have been written about these subjects. What we have mentioned, here, was only a small sample on the subject, from the point of view of the Qur'an and the conscience, which we will end on this important point:

The adherence to fatalism, from the view of some men, is not only for the philosophical discussions and the reasoning out of problems, but it is for some other important psychological and social matters, as well, which are undoubtedly factors in its appearance and continued popularity.

Many persons have assumed that the belief in ***'fatalism'*** or ***'fatal destiny'*** or ***'Fate'*** in the sense of fatalism, have a common source: to escape from personal responsibility, or to use it as a cover-up for the defeats and failures resulting from their negligence and carelessness, and/or due to their low desires.

Sometimes, colonizers, to break the perseverance of people and to extinguish the nation's fire of wrath, imposed this idea on them saying that their fate has been the same from the beginning, so, they can do nothing, but accept it.

Assuming that this belief is correct, the whole behaviour of all criminals is permissible and the vice of all sinners becomes excused, then, there will be no difference between an obedient person and a criminal.

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***Supplication:***

***O Lord! Protect us from these misled ideas and their consequences.***
***O Lord! On the Day that Hell lies in ambush for the transgressors and Heaven is a victory for the Righteous, we all have hope in your Grace.***
***O Lord! On the Day when all see their deeds in front of them, do not put us to shame.***

The End

Sura Nabaa
(The Great News)

# Notes:

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

# Sura Nazi'at (Those Who Tear Out)

*No. 79 (46 Verses)*

***Contents of the Sura:***

The theme in this Sura, like **Sura Nabaa**, is about Resurrection and, on the whole, can be divided into six parts:

1. It emphasizes on the certainty of the Great Day and lays stress on its occurrence by emphatic statements which relate to the Resurrection.
2. It points to one part of the frightening and dreadful incidents of that Day.
3. It precisely mentions the story of Moses and the end of the arrogant Pharaoh as a consolation for both the Prophet ***(p.b.u.h.)*** and the believers, as well as giving a warning to the disbelievers, and also contains an indication to the fact that the denial of the Resurrection is the source of many sins.
4. It mentions a few of the countless Powers of *Allah* which exist in the heavens and on the Earth; themselves, being evidences of the possibility of ***Resurrection*** and the new life after death.
5. It describes another part of the horrible events, on that Great Day, and the painful end of the disbelievers in contrast to the rewards of the righteous.
6. At the end of the Sura, it emphasizes on the fact that no one knows the date of that Day, however, it is certain that it is near.

The name **'Nāzi'āt** is derived from the first verse of this Sura.

***The Virtue in Studying this Sura:***

It is narrated that the Prophet *(p.b.u.h.)* said: "*For he who studies* **Sura Nazi'at** *the length of his stay and his reckoning on the Day of Judgement will last as long as the saying of a daily prayer and, thereafter, he will come into Paradise*".[1]

A tradition from Imam Sādiq *(p.b.u.h.)* says: "*He who studies it* (**Sura Nāzi'āt**) *will not pass away but satisfied, will not be brought into the Resurrection but satisfied, and will not come into Paradise but satisfied*", (with the infinite Grace of *Allah*).

The shocking verses of this Sura awaken the sleeping souls and draw their attention to their duties. Then, it is certain that only those who spiritually put the contents of this Sura into practice will receive these rewards; not those who content themselves with the mere reading of its words.

1 Majma'-al-Bayān, vol. 10, p. 428.

# Sura Nazi'at
## (Those Who Tear Out)

**No. 79 (verses 1-5)**

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

١ وَالنّٰزِعٰتِ غَرْقًا ○

٢ وَالنّٰشِطٰتِ نَشْطًا ○

٣ وَالسّٰبِحٰتِ سَبْحًا ○

٤ فَالسّٰبِقٰتِ سَبْقًا ○

٥ فَالْمُدَبِّرٰتِ اَمْرًا ○

**In The Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful**

*1. "By those (angels) who tear out (the souls of the wicked) with violence;"*

*2. "By those (angels) who gently draw out (the souls of the Blessed);"*

*3. "And by those who glide along (on errands of mercy),"*

*4. "Then press forward as in a race,"*

*5. "And those who manage the affair,"*

***Commentary:***

***By The Angels Who Try Hard:***

There are five important matters sworn to in the above verses and whose aim is to settle the rightfulness and certainty of the Resurrection.

*"By those (angels) who tear out (the souls of the wicked) with violence,"*

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*" By those (angels) who gently draw out (the souls of the blessed);*

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*" And by those who glide along (on errands of mercy), "*

*" Then press forward as in a race, "*

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*" And those who manage the affair, "*

First, some particular terms used in these verses should be made clear before we proceed with the commentary of the verses.

The word /nāzi'āt/ is based on /naza'a/ which means '***to pluck out***', or '***to draw out somewhat sharply, like drawing a bow to shoot arrows***'. This word is sometimes used for spiritual matters, such as the detachment of enmity or love from the heart.

The term /qaraqa/, according to many phylologists, means '***to sink, the act of drowning***' and sometimes it has been used in the sense of '***being entirely busy in an event or a disaster***'.

Or, the term /qarq/, according to Ibn-Manzūr in Lisān-al-Arab, is a noun replacing the infinitive with the meaning of / iqrāq / '***to exagerate***' which originally means '***to draw a bow to the extreme possible point***' , hence, to exagerate in anything.

This clearly shows that, in the above verse, the word does not mean '***to sink, or to drown***', but it means '***to do something to the extreme end***'.[1]

The term /nāšiṭāt/ is derived from /našṭ/ which originally means '***to untie the knots which are easily unfastened***'. '***A shallow well***', from which the bucket can be drawn easily at one pull, is called /inšāṭ / '. '***A camel which is instigated by a subtle hint and moves very fast***' is called /našitaḥ/. Therefore, this word is generally used in any case where a movement is fluently done.

The term / sābihat / is based on /sabh/ which means '***a quick movement in water or air***'. Hence, it is applied to swimming, or a swimming motion, or a swift gallop, or to perform a daily affair, quickly. The word / tasbīh / '***to praise Allah***' is from the same root, as if the one who praises *Allah* goes quickly forward in worship of the Lord.

The term / sābiqāt / is derived from / sabqah / which means '***to precede***' and since the action is usually impossible without full speed, this term is sometimes used in the sense of '***speed***', too.

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1 Lisān-al-Arab; Majma'-al-Bayān, The Commentary; Kashshāf, The Commentary; and Majma'-al-Bahrayn.

The term /mudabbirāt/ is based on /tadbīr/ which means ***'to mediate upon, or consider the end of an action'***, and since foresight causes one to arrange his affairs in a better manner, this word is used here in that sense.

Now, with due attention to what was explained about the words concerning the verses, we are going to proceed with the commentary.

To whom or to what do these five oaths refer? The oaths, at first sight, seem rather ambiguous, while at the same time this ambiguity stimulates us to mediate more deeply and thus causes our progressive thinking.

In this regard, commentators have given many different ideas and commentaries which mainly revolve around three points:

1. The oaths are aimed at ***'angels'*** who are ordered to tear out the souls of the wicked and the pagan, violently; those souls who have never assumed to submit to the Truth and to the angels who are appointed to draw out the souls of the blessed, gently and smoothly.

Then, it refers to the angels who move fast and fluently to carry out the ***Divine Command***. And in so doing, they race each other to fulfull their errands.

Finally, they arrange the affairs according to *Allah's* plan.

2. The oaths refer to the ***'stars'*** which continually set on one horizon and rise above another.

A group of them moves slowly, but another goes swiftly, from one place to another, with speed. They are floating above us in immense space, taking the lead one after another.

And finally, these stars, having their own influence and effects (like the effect of sunlight and moonlight on the Earth), arrange the affairs according to *Allah's* plan.

3. The oaths are aimed at the fighters of '***Holy War***' (Jihād), or at their horses, and who leave their own houses and cities with expressive grief, but, then they smoothly and happily leave for the battlefield taking the lead one after another directing and running the affairs of war.

On occasion, some commentators have tried to combine these three ideas by choosing one part from one commentary and another part from another one, but the framework is the same.[1]

1 A fourth point of probability cited refers to the natural movements of creatures in the world.

There is no contrast, of course, among these commentaries and it is possible that the above verses refer to all of them. But, on the whole, the first commentary, regarding its suitability to the main theme, ***Resurrection,*** and with the traditions by the sinless Imams, seems to be the most fitting.

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# Sura Nazi'at
## (Those Who Tear Out)

**No.79 (verses 6-14)**

٦ يَوْمَ تَرْجُفُ الرَّاجِفَةُ ○
٧ تَتْبَعُهَا الرَّادِفَةُ ○
٨ قُلُوبٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَاجِفَةٌ ○
٩ أَبْصَارُهَا خَاشِعَةٌ ○
١٠ يَقُولُونَ أَإِنَّا لَمَرْدُودُونَ فِي الْحَافِرَةِ ○
١١ أَإِذَا كُنَّا عِظَامًا نَخِرَةً ○
١٢ قَالُوا تِلْكَ إِذًا كَرَّةٌ خَاسِرَةٌ ○
١٣ فَإِنَّمَا هِيَ زَجْرَةٌ وَاحِدَةٌ ○
١٤ فَإِذَا هُمْ بِالسَّاهِرَةِ ○

*6. "The Day on which everything that can be in commotion will be in violent commotion,"*

*7. "Followed by another mighty convulsion,"*

*8. "Hearts that Day will be in agitation,"*

*9. "Cast down will be (their) eyes."*

*10. "They say (now): What! shall we indeed be returned to (our) former state?"*

*11. "What! when we shall have become rotten bones?"*

*12. "They said: That then will be a losing return."*

*13. "But it shall be only a single blast."*

*14. "When, behold, they shall be in the awakened state."*

**Commentary:**

***The Resurrection Will Happen with a Single Great Blast!***

The occurrence of the Resurrection, in the aforementioned verses, was described as a certain event confirmed by five strict oaths. Now, in the present verses, some of the signs and incidents on that *Great Day* are described.

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*"The Day on which everything that can be in commotion will be in violent commotion,"*

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*"Followed by another mighty convulsion".*

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The term /rājifah/ is based on /rajf/ which means: '*an agitation or a violent quake*'; and seditious news is called /arājīf/, because it causes a society to become agitated.

The term /rādifah/ is derived from /radf/ which means: *'a person or a thing streaming one after another'.*

Many commentators believe that /rājifah/ refers to '*the first Blast of the trumpet*' which is to precede the blast of the quake and the destruction of the universe, and the term /rādifah/ refers to the second Blast after which the *Resurrection* will occur and the new life begins.

Therefore, this verse is somewhat similar to what was revealed in **Sura Zumar No.39, verse 68**, thus: *"And the Trumpet will (just) be sounded, when all that are in the heavens and on earth will swoon, except such as it will please Allah (to exempt). Then will a second one be sounded when, behold, they will be standing and looking on!"*

Some others have also said that the term /rājifah/ refers to '*the quake that will destroy the earth*' and the term /rādifah/ means: '*the quake that will wreck the sky*'. However, the first commentary seems more appropriate.

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*"Hearts that Day will be in agitation,"*

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Being anxious for the *Reckoning* and penalty at the *Judgement*.

the hearts of the criminals, the sinners and the Unjust will severely tremble.

The term /wājifah/ is derived from /wajf/ which originally means '***to move fast***'; where the term /aujaf/ is used with the meaning of '***to make a horse or camel move briskly with a bounding pace***'; and since a quick movement causes shaking and anxiety, this word is also used in the sense of '***violent agitation***'.

This inner anxiety is so violent that its effects appear in the whole body of the sinners.

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***"Cast down will be (their) eyes."***

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On that Day, the eyes will subside, coming to a stop and be dazed as if they are blinded by fear.

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Then the scope of the speech changes from the ***Hereafter*** to this world.

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***"They say (now): What! shall we indeed be returned to (our) former state?"***

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The term /hāfirah/ is based on /hafr/ which originally means '***to dig***' and the cavity resulting from this action is called /hufrah/ '***ditch***'. The hoof is also called /hāfir/, because it is usually used to dig the soil. In any event, the term /hāfirah/ is metonymically used in the sense of '***a beginning, or original state, or former condition***'.

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***"What! when we shall have become rotten bones?"***

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This is the very thing that the rejecters of the Resurrection always used to emphasize on and said that it was not believable that rotten bones could come to life, again, because they imagined that the distance between rotten bones of dust and living creatures was too far. They had forgotten that they had been created from that very same dust.

The term /naxirah/ is based on /naxr/ which originally means: '***a rotten tree which is hollow and makes a whistling sound when the wind blows***'; hence, a nasal sound is called /naxīr/; and, so, the word has been used for everything which is rotten and worn.

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The disbelievers are not satisfied with the idea of ***Resurrection***, so, they ridicule it.

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"***They said: That then will be a losing return***".

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Commenting on the verse, another probability can come about which is that they expressed their view in a serious manner. If so, then, they want to say: '***If there is a return it will be a uselessly repeated one, which will be injurious***'. If this life is good why does *Allah* not continue the same one, and if it is bad why is there a return?

Regarding the term /hāfirah/ which means: '***a ditch***', the sentence "***Shall we indeed be returned to (our) former state?***" can, also, be an evidence for this commentary. But, the first is a more well-known commentary.

It is worth noting that in the former verses the term /yaqūlūna/ denoted that they used to say their words repeatedly, but in the current verse the word / qālū / shows that they did not always repeat the statement.

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At the end of this part, the ***Resurrection*** and the occurence of the ***Hereafter*** is again mentioned in a decisive and shocking tone.

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"***But is shall be only a single blast.***

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"***When, behold, they shall be in the awakened state.***"

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It means that the event of the ***Resurrection*** will not be the fruit of a difficult and complicated action for *Allah*. It only depends on His command and when the second blow of the Trumpet occurs all rotten

bones, which are scattered in the earth, will be gathered, revived and raised from their graves.

The term /zajrah/ means '***to cry for moving***', and, here, it means '***the second blast***'. Regarding the content of the meaning of these two terms /zajratun - wāḥidah/ '***only a single blast***', they denote that the ***Resurrection*** is a sudden happening and it is easy for *Allah's* Power that with a cry of an order by the angel of the Trumpet, all the dead come to life again and are present in the ***Hereafter*** for the ***Reckoning***.

The term /sahirāh/ is based on /sahar/ which means: '***to sit up at night***', and since this frightful occurence removes the sleep of night from the eyes and, moreover, since the land of the ***Hereafter*** is horrible, so, the gathering place, in the ***Hereafter***, is called /sāhirah/. The term is also used for any desert, since, all deserts are generally frightful and it seems that this fright takes the sleep from the eyes.

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# Sura Nazi'at
## (Those Who Tear Out)

**No. 79 (verses 15-26)**

١٥ هَلْ اَتٰىكَ حَدِيثُ مُوسٰى ○
١٦ اِذْنَادٰيهُ رَبُّهُ بِالْوَادِالْمُقَدَّسِ طُوىً ○
١٧ اِذْهَبْ اِلٰى فِرْعَوْنَ اِنَّهُ طَغٰى ○
١٨ فَقُلْ هَلْ لَكَ اِلٰى اَنْ تَزَكّٰى ○
١٩ وَاَهْدِيَكَ اِلٰى رَبِّكَ فَتَخْشٰى ○
٢٠ فَاَرٰيهُ الْاٰيَةَ الْكُبْرٰى ○
٢١ فَكَذَّبَ وَعَصٰى ○
٢٢ ثُمَّ اَدْبَرَ يَسْعٰى ○
٢٣ فَحَشَرَ فَنَادٰى ○
٢٤ فَقَالَ اَنَارَبُّكُمُ الْاَعْلٰى ○
٢٥ فَاَخَذَهُ اللّٰهُ نَكَالَ الْاٰخِرَةِ وَالْاُوْلٰى ○
٢٦ اِنَّ فِى ذٰلِكَ لَعِبْرَةً لِمَنْ يَخْشٰى ○

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*15. "Has the story of Moses reached you?"*

*16. "When his Lord called to him in the holy valley of Tuwā:"*

*17. "Go to Pharaoh, surely he has transgressed all bounds:"*

*18. "And say to him: 'Wouldst thou that thou shouldst be purified (from sin)?' "*

*19. 'And that I guide thee to thy Lord, so thou shouldst fear (Him)?'*

*20. "Then did (Moses) show him The Great Sign."*

*21. "But (Pharaoh) rejected it and disobeyed (guidance);"*

*22. "Further, he turned his back, striving hard (against Allah)."*

*23. "Then he collected (his men) and made a proclamation,"*

*24. "And said: I am your Lord, Most High."*

*25. "So Allah seized him for an exemplary punishment in the Hereafter and in this life."*

*26. "Surely in that is a lesson for him who fears (Allah)."*

### Commentary:

***Pharaoh used to say: I am your Lord, Most High.***

After a considerable description in the former verses about *Resurrection* and the rejection of the disbelievers, in the following verses the painful end of Pharaoh, one of the great arrogant blasphemers and rebels of history, is pointed out, to show Pagan Arabs that those who were stronger than them could not stand against *Allah's* wrath and punishment, and encourages the believers not to be afraid of the apparent strength of their enemies, because it is easy for Him to destroy them all.

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***"Has the story of Moses reached you?"***

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It is interesting that it addresses the Prophet *(p.b.u.h.)* and begins with a question to attract the attention of the listener in order to make him ready to hear this wonderful story.

*"When his Lord called to him in the holy valley of Ṭuwā."*

'Tuwā' may be the name of a sacred valley just below Mount Sinai, which was located in Shām (Damascus) between Madyan and Egypt, and where Moses, subsequently, received, in his heart, the first light of inspiration. The term is also mentioned in **Sura Ta-Ha, No. 20, verse 12** where Moses hears a voice say: " *Verily I am thy Lord! therefore (in My presence) put off thy shoes: thou art in the sacred valley Ṭuwā.*"

Or, it has a descriptive meaning derived from the term /tay/ which means '*the act of rolling up*', as if the land is rolled up in holiness and sanctity, or as Rāqib cites: Moses should cover a long distance to be prepared to receive the inspiration, but *Allah* rolled up the way and made it near for Moses to reach the goal.

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. Then, in three short, but meaningful sentences, it refers to the message that *Allah* sent to Moses in that valley where He commanded:

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*"Go to Pharaoh, surely he has transgressed all bounds."*

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*"And say to him: 'Wouldst thou that thou shouldst be purified (from sin)?' "*

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*"And that I guide thee to thy Lord, so thou shouldst fear (Him)?"*

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And, since invitations should be accompanied by reasons, in the next verse it says: *"Then did (Moses) show him The Great Sign."*

The Great Sign, whether being the '*white shining hand*' or the rod that became a *'snake active in motion'* or both of them, has been one of the Great Signs that Moses relied on in the prime of his prophetic mission.

There are some interesting points in these four verses that should be noted:

1. It says that Moses is told to go to Pharaoh, because he has transgressed, and this shows that one of the great missions that the prophets had was to guide the rebels or to oppose them decisively.

2. This invitation to purity, by Moses, with those conciliatory words and in the most benevolent terms, to Pharaoh, where *Allah* tells Moses to go: "*And say (to him) 'Wouldst thou that thou shouldst be purified (from sin)?* '" is similar to the sense found in **Sura Taha, No. 20, verse 44** which says: "*But speak to him mildly ...*".

3. This meaning has a delicate hint to the fact that the goal of the prophecy of the prophets is to purify men and lead them to their real purifed nature. By the way, it does not say '*I purify you*', it says: "*...Wouldst thou that thou shouldst be purified?...*", which indicates that purification should come about from inside and by one's own intention; not from an imposition from an outside source.

4. The statement of '*guidance*' after mentioning the sense '*to purify*' is a reason for showing that '*purification*' is a preliminary step to '*guidance*'.

5. The term /rabbika/ '*your Lord*', indeed, is an emphasis on this fact that '*I take you to Him Who is your master and your cherisher. Why do you flee from the path of happiness?* '.

6. '*Fear of Allah*' is the fruit of guidance. Truly, those who are guided to monotheism feel responsible before *Allah*, the Almighty, because fear of *Allah* never appears without knowing Him. That is why in **Sura Fatir, No. 35, verse 28** it says: "*...those truly fear Allah among His Servants, who have knowledge...*".

7. First, Moses appeals to Pharaoh's emotional guidance and then, he evokes his rational and logical guidance by showing him his Great Sign, his great miracle. The most effective way of preaching is by influencing emotions and, then, presenting the reasons and evidences.

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Now, we will deal with Pharaoh and his reaction to so much affection and love and the beautiful, reasonable speech and the Great Sign that Moses showed him.

The fact is that many signs were given, but Pharaoh and his men were steeped in arrogance.

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"*But (Pharaoh) rejected it and disobeyed (guidance)*".

This shows that rejection is the primary step in transgression,

as well as faith, and admitting the truth is paramount to obedience.

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Pharaoh was not satisfied with only rejecting the guidance.

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"***Further, he turned his back, striving hard (against Allah)***".

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Since the miracle of Moses threatened the whole devilish unity of Pharaoh, he sent some men to different cities to gather the sorcerers and he also ordered to announce people to come to see the challenge between the sorcerers and Moses.

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"***Then he collected (his men) and made a proclamation***".

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Though the term /ḥašara/ is mentioned, here, alone, but with reference to the term /ḥāširīn/ in **Sura A'rāf, No. 7, verses 111-112** which say: "***...and send to the cities men to collect***", "***And bring up to thee all (our) sorcerers well-versed***", and also referring to the term /nādā/ '***made a proclamation***', though it is absolute, it points to the invitation of Pharaoh to the people to gather and watch the challenge; with the evidence from **Sura Shu'arā, No.26, verse 39** which says: "***And the people were told: Are you (now) assembled?*** "

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He did not quit with these plots and he made claims with the worst statements.

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"***And said: I am your Lord, Most High.***"

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Verily, it is amazing that these arrogant transgressors, when riding on the horse-back of pride, know no limit for their selfishness. They are not content with their claim of being Lord; they want to be '***Lord of Lords***'.

This statement denotes that he says, "If you worship idols, it is accepted, but I am the highest of all and I am your Lord."

And, it is interesting that Pharaoh, himself, was one of the idol-worshippers as **Sura A'rāf, No.7, verse 127** attests to: " ***...wilt thou leave Moses and his people, to spread mischief in the land, and so to abandon thee and thy gods?***", but here, he claims that he is their Lord, Most High, that is, he considered himself still higher than his own god; and this is in the vain statements of all transgressors.

And, more astonishing than this is that in **Sura Qaṣaṣ, No. 28, verse 38** he claims "***...No god do I know for you but myself...***",; but in the current verse he goes further and says: "***I am your Lord, Most High***" and this is the manner of these air-headed rebels.

He reached the ultimate point of disobedience and deserved the most painful punishments. He and his corrupted surroundings should perish by the order of *Allah*, that is why, in the next verse, it says:

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***"So Allah seized him with an exemplary punishment in the Hereafter and in this life".***

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The term /nakāl/ originally means '***weakness***' and '***disability***', so it is said of a person who fails to pay his debt and since the divine chastisement makes people weak and stops others from doing sin; it is called /nakāl/.

The term /nakāl-al-āxirah/ means '***the chastisement of the Hereafter***' which will envelop Pharaoh and his people and because of its importance it is mentioned first and the term /ūlā/ '***former life***' which meant '***the punishment in this world***', is mentioned second and is that which destroyed Pharaoh and all his followers in waters of the sea.

There is another commentary which says that /ūlā/ means '***the first word that Pharaoh said claiming to be a deity***' (**Sura Qaṣaṣ, No. 28, verse 32**), and / āxirah/ refers to the last word that he said in which he claimed that he was their Lord, Most High. Then, *Allah* punished him for these two blasphemous statements, even in this life.

This very idea is narrated in a tradition from Imam Bāqir who added that 40 years had elapsed between the occurence of these two statements (meaning that *Allah* did not just punish him to complete

the argument). [1]

This commentary is more fitting with the term /axaða/ which is a verb in the past tense, and indicates that the punishment was completely fulfilled in the present world, and also with the next verse that considers the event to be a lesson.

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***"Surely in that is a lesson for him who fears (Allah)".***

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This verse clearly shows that learning a lesson from these events is possible only for those who, more or less, fear *Allah* and possess a feeling of responsibility in their hearts.

Yes, that was the destiny of Pharaoh, the blasphemer; an example to make other pagans and chiefs of the Arab disbelievers and all those who follow on the path of Pharaoh, in any age, understand the facts and know that *Allah*'s law is always true, firm and unchangeable.

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### *Explanation:*

***A Small Sample of the Elegance of Holy Qur'an.***

Careful attention paid to the above eleven short verses is enough to show us the fine elegance and fluency of Qur'an; a summary of all the statements and activities concerning Moses and Pharaoh: the motive of prophethood, its aim, the means of purification, the manner of invitation, kinds of actions and reactions, the description of Pharaoh's plot, some examples of his vain claims, and, finally, the painful punishment of this arrogant blasphemer, which can, consequently, teach a lesson to all those who have insight, are illustrated.

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1 Majma'-al-Bayān, vol. 10, p.432.

# Sura Nazi'at

*No. 79 (verses 27 - 33)*

٢٧ ءَاَنْتُمْ اَشَدُّ خَلْقًا اَمِ السَّمَآءُ بَنٰيهَا ○
٢٨ رَفَعَ سَمْكَهَا فَسَوّٰيهَا ○
٢٩ وَاَغْطَشَ لَيْلَهَا وَاَخْرَجَ ضُحٰيهَا ○
٣٠ وَالْاَرْضَ بَعْدَ ذٰلِكَ دَحٰيهَا ○
٣١ اَخْرَجَ مِنْهَا مَآءَهَا وَمَرْعٰيهَا ○
٣٢ وَالْجِبَالَ اَرْسٰيهَا ○
٣٣ مَتَاعًا لَكُمْ وَلِاَنْعَامِكُمْ ○

*27. "Is the creation of you harder or the heaven He built?"*
*28. "He raised its vault and regulated it,"*
*29. "And He made dark its night and brought forth its daylight,"*
*30. "And the earth, after that He spread it out;"*
*31. "He brought forth from it its water and its pasture,"*
*32. "And the mountains, He set them firm,"*
*33. "For use and convenience to you and your cattle."*

**Commentary:**

*A REASON FOR THE RESURRECTION:*

***Are you more difficult to create or the heaven He built?***

With the story of Moses and Pharaoh as a lesson for all trangressors and rejecters, our attention is turned to the ***Resurrection***, again, and the statements are about some attributes of *Allah's* infinite Power, as a proof to the possible existence of ***Resurrection***. These words

convey the explanation of some of the unlimited blessings of *Allah* endowed to Man to evoke a sense of gratitude, in the soul, which is the origin of knowing *Allah*.

At first, it addresses the rejecters of the ***Resurrection*** and, in a scorning tone, questions:

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***"Is the creation of you harder or the heaven He built?"***

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This statement is, in fact, a reply to their words in the former verses, thus: " ***They say (now): What! shall we indeed be returned to (our) former state?"*** Now, this verse says that those who have any degree of understanding know that the creation of this lofty sky, with so many celestial gigantic bodies and endless galaxies, is not comparable with the creation of Man. He who has this authority, how could He be unable to return you to life again?

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***"He raised its vault and regulated it",***

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The term /samk/ originally means '***height, or altitude***'. It has also been used with the meaning of '***ceiling***'.

In Tafsīr Kabīr, a commentary by Fakhr-ud-din Mohammad Rāzī, it is said that when we measure from the top to the bottom of something it is called depth ('umq), and when we measure it from bottom to top it is called height (samk). [1]

The term /sawwāhā/ is based on the term /taswīyah/ which means '***to make level or equal, to proportion something***'. It refers, here, to the accurate regularity that dominates all the celestial bodies; and, if /samk/ means '***ceiling***' it refers to the thick atmosphere which, like a hard and safe shield, has surrounded the earth and protects it from the rush of meteorites and fatal cosmic rays.

Some have considered the above sense to mean the globular form of the atmosphere that covers all around of the earth. They believe that using the term, with the sense of '***equal***', refers to the equal distance

1 Tafsīr Kabīr, vol. 31, p. 46.

betwen the parts of the ceiling and its center, that is the Earth; and this cannot exist, but only by being globular.

It is also probable that the verse points to both the height of the sky and the extreme long distance of the celestial bodies from us, and the safe vault around the Earth.

In any case, this verse is similar to what **Sura Mo'min, No. 40, verse 57** says: "*Assuredly the creation of the heavens and the earth is a greater (matter) than the creation of men; yet most men understand not*".

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"*And He made dark its night and brought forth its daylight.*"

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Each of these two has an extraordinary important role in the life of any living creature whether animal or plant. Man cannot live without sunlight, because all of his sustenance, his senses and movement depend on it, as well as his life is not possible without the darkness, which is the cause of his tranquility.

The term /aḍṭaša/ is based on /ḍatš/ with the sense of '***dark***' but, Rāqib cites in his book, Mufradāt, that its origin is /aḍṭaš/, which means '*a person who has weak or dim eyes*'.

The terms / wa ḍuḥā/ means '***when the full brightness of the sun spreads in the heaven and over the earth.***'

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"*And the earth, after that He spread it out*".

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The term /duhā/ is derived from /dahw/ which means '***to spread, to expand***'. Some have also rendered it to mean '***to move something from its original place***'. And since these two meanings are interdependant, they return to one root.

The objective meaning of /dahw-ul-arḍ/ is that, at first, the surface of the Earth was totally covered with water from the prime rainfalls, the water of which was gradually sucked down through the holes and ditches in the ground, and, then, parts of the land appeared. It expanded. little by little, until it formed its present state. (And this happened after the creation of heavens and the Earth.)

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*"He brought forth from it its water and its pasture".*

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This idea shows that there was water stored in the layers of the earth. Then, it appeared flowing over the ground in the form of springs and streams and forming the seas and lakes.

The term / mar 'ā / is a place-noun and means '***pasture***'. It is originally derived from /ra'y/ in the sense of '***animal protection***' from the point of view of foodstuff or, feeding cattle, or in other respects; then the term / mūra'at / has been used in the sense of protection and arranging the affairs. The known proverb: *"Each of you all is a shepherd and responsible,"* is, also, a reference to the necessity of people needing to be protected by each other.

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Even though different factors, such as continuous storms, gravitational pull; caused by the sun or the moon having an effect on the surface of the land, and earthquakes; produced from the pressure of the inner molten lava of the earth, could disturb the peace and calmness of the ground, it became still and peaceful due to the existence of high mountain ranges throughout the earth.

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*"And the mountains, He set them firm"*

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*"For use and convenience to you and your cattle".*

Yes, He raised the vault of the sky, and set the light and darkness regular. He expanded the earth, and put forth water and plants from it. He made the mountains over the face of the earth to protect it; preparing everything for the life of Man, so that all of them obey and are at His service.

The reason is that Man enjoys the bounties of life and should be grateful to *Allah,* Who created them all, and obey His laws.

These affairs are, on the one hand, the kinds of power He has over the ***Resurrection*** and, on the other hand, they refer to some reasons and signs along the path of the existence of unity and knowing *Allah.*

# Sura Nazi'at
## (Those Who Tear Out)

**No. 79 (verses 34-41)**

٣٤ فَإِذَا جَاءَتِ الطَّامَّةُ الْكُبْرَىٰ ○
٣٥ يَوْمَ يَتَذَكَّرُ الْإِنسَانُ مَا سَعَىٰ ○
٣٦ وَبُرِّزَتِ الْجَحِيمُ لِمَن يَرَىٰ ○
٣٧ فَأَمَّا مَن طَغَىٰ ○
٣٨ وَآثَرَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا ○
٣٩ فَإِنَّ الْجَحِيمَ هِيَ الْمَأْوَىٰ ○
٤٠ وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ وَنَهَى النَّفْسَ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ ○
٤١ فَإِنَّ الْجَنَّةَ هِيَ الْمَأْوَىٰ ○

*34. "But when the great calamity comes,"*

*35. "That Day man shall remember what he strove for,"*

*36. "And Hell-fire shall be manifest for him who sees,"*

*37. "Then as for him who transgressed,"*

*38. "And had preferred the life of this world,"*

*39. "Then surely Hell-fire will be the Abode."*

*40. "And as for him who feared his Lord's presence and restrained the soul from the low desires,"*

*41. "Then surely the Garden will be the Abode."*

### Commentary:

***Those who restrain their soul from low desires.***

To continue stating the details of the ***Resurrection***, mentioned in the former verses, the following verses refer to the subject, again, and explain the destiny of those who fear *Allah* and of those who disobey and follow their low desires.

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***"But when the great calamity comes"***

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The term / ṭāmmah/ is derived from / tamm/ which originally means *'to fill'* and anything which is in a high state is called / ṭāmmah/; hence, it is used for the great and difficult events and also for the grievous, disasterous happenings to come. Here, it refers to the ***Hereafter***, which is full of horrible incidents. It is characterized by the word *'great'* as an emphasis on the importance of this unique event.

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***"That Day man shall remember what he strove for".***

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But what is the use of this remembrance? How could it be helpful to him? If he asks to return to this world to recompense the past, his request will be denied and the reply will be: *'Nay!'*.

If he repents for the pardoning of his evil deeds, it will be useless, since it will be too late for it.

Then, he can do nothing, but regret and as the Qur'an says: ***"The Day that the wrongdoer will bite at his hands..."***.(**Sura Furqān, No. 25, verse 27.**)

It should be noted that the term /yataðakkaru/ is a verb in the future tense, which usually expresses the constancy of an action, i.e. on that Day Man will constantly remember all his deeds because on that Day the hearts and the souls of men will be unveiled and all the hidden facts will be made manifest.

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***"And Hell-fire shall be manifest for him who sees".***

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Hell exists at the present time. Furthermore, according to **Sura 'Ankabūt, No.29, verse 54**: ***"But, of a surety, Hell will encompass the rejecters of Faith!"***, however, the curtains of this world hinder it to be seen; hence, on the Day of Judgment, that is, the Day of the manifestation of everything, Hell becomes apparent and the most clearly visible.

The words /liman yarā/ '***for him who sees***' denote that Hell, on that Day, will be so visible that everyone who has the ability to see, and with no exception, will see it. It will be covert neither to the righteous nor to the evildoers, whose abode is Hell.

It is, also, probable that the words refer to those who have eyes to see with on that Day, because according to **Sura Ṭā-Hā, No.20, verse 124**, some will be blind then: "***...and We shall raise him up blind on the Day of Judgment***". But the first meaning which is accepted by many commentators seems more fitting, because Hell, for the evildoers, is a punishment and a doubled penalty. That some of them will be blind, perhaps, occurs at some definite sites in the *Hereafter*, not everywhere.

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Then, attention is paid to the status of sinners and disbelievers in the *Hereafter* and, in a few short, but meaningful sentences, both the destiny of theirs and its causes are expressed:

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***"Then as for him who transgressed",***

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***"And had preferred the life of this world,"***

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***"Then surely Hell-fire will be the Abode".***

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In the first sentence, their corrupted belief is referred to since transgression originates from self-complacence and self-conceit which, itself, is caused by the absence of knowledge of *Allah*.

One who knows *Allah*, the Almighty, finds himself insignificant and never rejects his servitude.

The second sentence points to their corrupted deeds, because transgression causes man to consider the glitter of the lusts of this scintillating world his highest values and prefers it to everything else.

These two, in fact, are the '*cause and effect*' of each other. Transgression caused by corrupted belief is the source of corrupted deeds and also preferring this fleeting life to all, brings about the blazing fire of Hell.

Hazrat Ali (*p.b.u.h.*) has said: "*He who transgresses, goes astray and acts not reasonably*".[1] This is because of self-complacence in which Man acknowledges his low desires and conceives them as being valuable.

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Then, through two short and extremely meaningful sentences, it characterizes the Blessed, thus:

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"*And as for him who feared his Lord's presence and restrained the soul from the low desires*".

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"*Then surely the Garden will be the Abode*".

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Yes, the first condition of being '*blessed*' is '*fear*' caused by '*knowledge*' knowing the presence of the Lord and being afraid of disobeying His command. The second condition, which is, indeed, the fruit of knowledge and fear of *Allah*, is restraining the soul from rebellion, since, all the sins, corruptions and disasters, come from low desires which is the worst god worshipped in the world.

The means of Satan to influence in Man's entity, is still '*low desire*'. It is this inner evil that opens the gate for the outer Evil to come in, or else this case would never be possible, as **Sura Al-Hijr, No. 15, verse 42** says: "*For over My servants no authority shalt thou have, except such as put themselves in the wrong and follow thee*".

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### Explanations:

***What is the meaning of "the Presence of the Lord"?***

It is worthy to note that in Verse 40, of the current Sura, it says: "*... as for him who feared his Lord's presence...*" but it does not say: '*as for*

1 Nūr-uth-Thaqalayn, vol.5, p.506, Tradition No.43.

*him who feared his Lord*'. Then, what is '*the 'Lord's presence*'?

The following are some different commentaries to be considered:

1. It means '*the halting-places in the Hereafter*' wherein Man stands in front of the Lord for *Judgment*. Therefore, *'the Lord's presence'* is in the sense of '*his presence with his Lord*', i.e. the standing of Man before his Lord.

2. It points to '*Allah's knowledge and His protection*' for all human beings; as **Sura Ra'd, No. 13, verse 33** says: *"Is then He Who standeth over every soul (and knoweth) all that it doth,(like any others)?"*

The next evidence to this commentary is the tradition that has been narrated from Imam Sādiq who said: *"He who knows that Allah sees him, hears what he says, knows what he does regarding good or evil, and this consciousness keeps him away from doing wrong, it is he who '... feared his Lord's presence and restrained the soul from the low desires'* ".

3. It means '*His Justice*' since, His Holy Essence is not frightening. The fear is for His Justice. In fact, this fear is obtained from the comparison between our actions and His Justice. Criminals tremble when they see the just judge, and fear when they hear the words '*court and Judgment*', while an innocent person feels no fear of any of them.

These three commentaries do not contrast with each other and all of them may be gathered in the meaning of the verse.

***The Relation between the Rebels and Worldliness:***

In fact, the above verses clearly and in a beautiful style illustrate the principles of both Man's happiness and adversity. The adversity of Man is considered in his worldliness, and his happiness is found in his fear of *Allah* and the absence of low desires; the whole of which is the extract and essence in the teachings of all Prophets and Saints.

A traditon from Hazrat Ali (*p.h.u.b.*) says: *"O' people what I fear most about you are two things: acting according to desires and extending of hope. As regards acting according to desires, this prevents from truth; and as regards extending of hopes, it makes one forget the next world."*[1]

Low desires put a curtain over Man's mind, decorates his evil deeds to seem good in his sight, robs him of the sense of recognition; which is the greatest gift of *Allah*, is the privilege of Man over animal,

1 Nahj-ul Balāqa, Sermon No. 42 (Arabic Version), No. 47 (English Version).

and makes him preoccupied with himself. This is the very thing that Jacob, the conscientious prophet, told his guilty children: "*...Nay, but your minds have made up a tale (that may pass) with you ....*", (**Sura Yūsuf, No. 12, verse 18**).

There are many things to say in this regard, but we will conclude this subject with two traditions from Ahlul-Bait (***p.b.u.th.***) containing many facts.

Imam Bāqir has said: "***Paradise is covered in pain and patience. Then he who shows patience in suffering and toils in this life, will enjoy Heaven. Hell is covered in (unlawful) pleasures and lusts. Then, he who leaves his soul in them, will enter into the fire.***" [1]

Imam Sādiq has said: "***Don't let the soul free in its low desires. Surely low desires cause the death of the soul, and if you leave the soul free in its low desires, it causes pain for it, and keeping it apart from its low desires is a remedy for it.***"[2] Not only is the fire of the Next World the fruit of lusts and low desires, but, it is also the blazing fires of this world, such as: insecurities, chaoses, wars, murders, conflicts, hatreds and vengeances which totally originate from them.

***There are only Two Groups.***

In the above verses people are catagorized in only two groups: the worldly rebels and the pious who fear *Allah*. The permanent abode of the first group is Hell, and the eternal site of the second group is Heaven.

Of course, there is, here, a third group who are not mentioned in these verses. They are those guilty believers, of minor sins, through human frailty, who had repented and been forgiven and if they deserve it will join the blessed, and if not, will enter Hell, but, they will not be there for ever.

1 Nūr-uth-Thaqalayn, vol. 5, p. 507, Tradition No. 46.

2 Ibid., Tradition No. 45.

# Sura Nazi'at
## (Those Who Tear Out)

**No. 79 (verses 42-46)**

٤٢ يَسْئَلُونَكَ عَنِ السَّاعَةِ اَيَّانَ مُرْسٰيهَا ○
٤٣ فِيمَ اَنْتَ مِنْ ذِكْرٰيهَا ○
٤٤ اِلٰى رَبِّكَ مُنْتَهٰيهَا ○
٤٥ اِنَّمَآ اَنْتَ مُنْذِرُ مَنْ يَخْشٰيهَا ○
٤٦ كَاَنَّهُمْ يَوْمَ يَرَوْنَهَا لَمْ يَلْبَثُوٓا اِلَّا عَشِيَّةً اَوْ ضُحٰيهَا ○

*42. "They ask you about the Hour, When will it come to pass?"*

*43. "Wherein art thou (concerned) with the declaration thereof?"*

*44. "With thy Lord is the limit fixed therefor".*

*45. "You are but a Warner to him who fears it ."*

*46. "It shall seem to them on the day when they behold it, as though they tarried not (in their graves) but an evening or a forenoon."*

### Commentary:

***Only Allah knows the Final Hour, the Resurrection.***

In the aforementioned verses the Hereafter and the destiny of the righteous and the wrongdoers, on that Day, is described and, now, in the following verses the focus is on the common question of the rejecters of the ***Resurrection***. It says:

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*"They ask you about the Hour, When will it come to pass?"*

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Answering this question, to make them understand that no one knows when the final Great Event will take place, the Holy Qur'an addresses the Prophet ***(p.b.u.h.)*** and says:

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*"Wherein art thou (concerned) with the declaration thereof?"*

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When the date of the occurrence of the *Hereafter* is hidden even from the Prophet, then the status of others is obvious. This is of the knowledge which is hidden and exclusively belongs to *Allah*. It is out of reach for all.

It is mentioned, repeatedly, that one of the things that are veiled for everyone is the exact time of the *Hereafter* whose training effect is not possible save being secret; since, if the exact time appointed for it were revealed and it were far away, everyone would sink deeply in negligence; and if it were near, avoiding sin would be done confusingly and far from free-will and intention, both of which are worthless from the point of training.

There have been other probabilities cited, also, and among them is that: '*you were not appointed in order to tell the time of the occurence of the Hereafter but, you are appointed to inform others of its existence and that it will certainly happen.*

Moreover, '*your appointment shows that the Day of Judgment is coming nearer*'. So, the holy Prophet *(p.b.u.h.)* is reported to have said, showing his two forefingers: "*My appointment and the Hour are like these.*"[1] But the first commentary is the most appropriate.

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*"With thy Lord is the limit fixed therefor".*

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It is only He Who knows the Hour. No man knows the mystery and no effort and endeavour is useful for finding the answer.

This is the same idea that **Sura Luqmān, No.31, verse 34** says: " *Verily the knowledge of the Hour is with Allah (alone)...*". And, again, from **Sura A'rāf, No.7, verse 187**: "*...Say: 'the knowledge thereof is with my Lord (alone)...*"

Some have said that the objective point of the above sentence is that the actual occurence of the *Hereafter* is under His control, and the

1 Tafsīr-i-Fakhr-i-Rāzī, The Commentary, vol. 29, p. 29. This matter is mentioned referring to Sura 49, verse 18 in Majma'-al-Bayān, Qartabī, Fīzalāl and others.

sentence is a statement for the cause of what is said in the previous verse. To combine these two commentaries is possible, too.

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*"You are but a Warner to him who fears."*

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'Your duty is only to warn them and you are not responsible to tell them the final Hour.'

It is worthy to note that the warning referred to, here, is only to those who fear that *Day* and this is similar to what **Sura Baqarah, No. 2, verse 2** says: *"This is the Book; in it is guidance without doubt, to those who fear Allah"*. These kind of statements refer to the fact that when there is an absence in the soul for seeking the right and the truth and a lack of the sense of responsibility in front of *Allah* exists, then, Man neither goes in search of the heavenly books for information about the *Resurrection* nor does he listen to the warnings of the Prophets and Saints.

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Finally, to express that there is not a great deal of time until the *Day of Judgment*, it says:

*"It shall seem to them on the day when they behold it, as though they tarried not (in their graves) but an evening or a forenoon".*

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The length of the life, in this world, is so short and the period of the intermediate state (Barzakh) passes so quickly, that when they rise, again, for the *Day of Judgment* the whole period seems to them as if it were only a few hours.

This idea, that the life in this world is short and fleeting, is both practical and true and, in comparison with the *Hereafter* and the life of the whole Universe, it is like a moment.

The term /'ašiyyah/ means '*evening*', and /duha/ is used for '*a period when the sun has come up and its beam of light has spread*'.

Some verses of the Qur'an indicate that on the *Day of Judgment* the sinners will talk about the length of their stay in partition (purgatory) or their life in this world, in this manner: *"In whispers will*

*they consult each other: 'Ye tarried not longer than ten (days)'"* (Sura Ṭā-Hā, No. 20, verse 103).

But those of them who think more soundly say: *"...their leader most eminent in conduct will say: 'Tarried not longer than a day!", (Sura Ṭā-Hā, No. 20, verse 104).*

In another Sura, it narrates the sinners idea: *"On the Day that the Hour (of reckoning) will be established, the transgressors will swear that they tarried not but an hour..." (Sura Rūm, No. 30, verse 55).*

The difference between these various statements is that the sinners want to compare the shortness of this time with an approximate length of their stay, therefore, each of them states his own feelings, and they all have one thing in common which is that the shortness of life in this world is compared to the life in the *Hereafter.* This, of course, is a matter that shakes Man, and awakens him from the sleep of negligence.

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***Supplication:***

**O Lord! Gift us the calmness and tranquility on that Great Day, in partition (purgatory) and in this world.**

**O Lord! No one can erase the troubles of that Great Day, but by your Grace. Then, we seek your holy Grace.**

**O Lord! Lead us so that you put us among those who fear your presence and restrain their soul from low desires and will reside in eternal Heaven.**

## The End

### Sura Nāzi'āt
### (Those Who Tear Out)

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

# Sura 'Abasa
# (He Frowned)

*No. 80 (42 Verses)*

***Contents of the Sura:***

Sura Abasa is short, but contains various important subjects which especially emphasize on the ***Resurrection*** and can be summarized under five topics:

1. *Allah's* serious admonishment to the one who did not show suitable behaviour to a truth-seeking blind man.
2. The importance of the ***Holy Qur'an.***
3. Man's ungratefulness toward the blessings of *Allah.*
4. A partial description about His blessings in the field of nutrition for Men and animals in order to stimulate a sense of thankfulness.
5. Some hints about the terrible incidents of the ***Day of Judgment,*** and the fate of the believers and disbelievers on that Day.

The name of the Sura is derived from its first verse.

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***The Virtue in Studying this Sura:***

A tradition from Prophet Mohammad ***(p.b.u.h.)*** says: "***One who studies Sura 'Abasa will arrive at the Gathering Place smiling and rejoicing on The Day of Judgment.***"

# Sura 'Abasa
## (He Frowned)

**No. 80 (verses 1-10)**

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

١ عَبَسَ وَ تَوَلّٰى ○
٢ اَنْ جَآءَهُ الْاَعْمٰى ○
٣ وَ مَا يُدْرِيكَ لَعَلَّهُ يَزَّكّٰى ○
٤ اَوْ يَذَّكَّرُ فَتَنْفَعَهُ الذِّكْرٰى ○
٥ اَمَّا مَنِ اسْتَغْنٰى ○
٦ فَاَنْتَ لَهُ تَصَدّٰى ○
٧ وَ مَا عَلَيْكَ اَلَّا يَزَّكّٰى ○
٨ وَاَمَّا مَنْ جَآءَكَ يَسْعٰى ○
٩ وَ هُوَ يَخْشٰى ○
١٠ فَاَنْتَ عَنْهُ تَلَهّٰى ○

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# Sura 'Abasa
## (He Frowned)
## No. 80 (verses 1-10)

**In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful**

*1. "He frowned and turned away,"*

*2. "Because there came to him the blind man."*

*3. "And what would make you know that he might (spiritually) purify himself,"*

*4. "Or become reminded so that the reminder might profit him?"*

*5. "As to one who regards himself as self-sufficient,"*

*6. "To him do you address yourself?"*

*7. "Though it is no blame on you if he would not (spiritually) purify himself."*

*8. "But as to him who comes to you striving hard,"*

*9. "And he fears (Allah in his heart),"*

*10. "Of him wast thou unmindful."*

### *The Occasion of Revelation:*

These words show that *Allah* has blamed someone for an action which gave superiority to a man or men of wealth rather than to a blind man who was seeking the truth. But who was the admonished one? There are a variety of ideas on this subject, but, the most famous commentary among the scholars is the following:

Once the Prophet *(p.b.u.h.)* was deeply engaged in trying to explain the ***Holy Qur'an*** to some pagan Quraish leaders such as 'Atabat-ibn-i-Rabi 'ah, Abū-Jahl, 'Abbas-ibn-'Abdul-Mutallib and some others. He was hopeful that it would attract them to Islam, and in so doing, surely a lot of others would come to Islam, too, and therefore, put an end to their sabotage. But, suddenly, he was interrupted by a blind man;

'Abdullāh-ibn-Ummi-Maktūm, who was apparently poor, so that no one took notice of him. He wanted to learn the Qur'an and asked the Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*) to teach him. He repeated his statement again and again, because he did not know exactly whom he was talking to.

The Holy Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*) naturally did not like the frequent interruptions and this was seen on his face. "***These Arab leaders***", he said to himself " ***may think of Mohammad as a Prophet of the poor and the blind.***" Then he turned away from 'Abdullāh and continued the work at preaching *Allah's* Message to them.

At that moment he received the new verses stated above, which admonished the Prophet *(p.b.u.h.)* for this action. Afterwards, he always held 'Abdullāh in high honour, and whenever he saw him he used to tell him "***Hail to the one for whom Allah admonished me.***" And, then, he questioned the man: "***Is there anything that I can do for you?***" The blind man became a true and sincere Muslim and as a direct appointment by the Prophet, himself, become a governor of Medina on two occasions when the Prophet *(p.b.u.h.)* went to battle.

A second opinion about this revelation is given for these verses, which is that a man from the Umayyads was sitting with the Prophet Mohammad (*p.b.u.h.*) when 'Abdullāh-ibn Ummi-Maktūm arrived. When this man saw 'Abdullāh, he frowned and turned his back to him, as if he might become infected by him.

The aforementioned verses were about the man sitting with the Prophet *(p.b.u.h.)* and the admonishment was for him. It has been narrated that Imam Sadiq (*p.b.u.h.*) agreed with this opinion when he was asked about this occasion of revelation. The late Sayyed Murtaza, the great scholar of Islam, approved with this occasion of revelation, as well.

There is nothing, of course, in the verse, itself, to show clearly that the one who is addressed is Mohammad *( p.b.u.h.)*. The only sign may be found in verses 8 to 10 where they say: "***But as to him who comes to you striving hard,***" "***And he fears (Allah in his heart).***" "***Of him wast thou unmindful.***"

This is the matter that can be true about the Prophet *(p.b.u.h.)* more than anyone else. But, according to what 'Sayyed Murtaza' has said, there are some signs in the verses showing that '***the one***' is not the Prophet *(p.b.u.h.)*. Some of them are as follows:

'***To be frowning***' was not one of the Prophets' character traits, especially for the Prophet of Islam. He spoke gently and with a kind face even to his own enemies and was even more kind to the truth-seeking believers.

Moreover, paying attention to the wealthy people and neglecting the poor is not agreeable, at all, with what is said about him in **Sura Qalam, No. 68, verse 4** which says: "***And thou (standst) on an exalted standard of character***", (with the particular note that **Sura Qalam** had been revealed before the revelation of **Sura 'Abasa**).

But, supposing the first occasion of revelation is true, this act is not more than '***leaving to the better***'/ tark-i-'ūlā / and there is nothing in it that contrasts with the state of sinlessness.

Since, first, the purpose of the Prophet ***(p.b.u.h.)*** was definitely to absorb the Quraish leaders in order to spread Islam and to stop their sabotage.

Secondly, it does not matter so much to frown at a blind man, because he cannot see. Moreover, 'Abdullāh-ibn-Ummi-Maktūm did not keep the rules of etiquette, since, he should not have interrupted the Prophet (***p.b.u.h.***) when he was busy talking to the people who were gathered there.

On the one hand, since *Allah's* emphasis is on love and affection for the poor and the afflicted, among the believers, it does not approve of the little amount of heedlessness from His prophet to that believing servant, so He admonishes him.

On the other hand, if we consider the Prophet ***(p.b.u.h.)*** as a true, great prophet, from these verses we see that they are almost a miracle, because the great leader of Islam mentions such important resposibilities in the heavenly Holy Book, about himself, that he finds the slightest '***leaving to the better***' an option: i.e. the little amount of heedlessness to a blind truth-seeking believer, which *Allah* admonishes him for. This is an evidence for the fact that this Book is from *Allah* and he is a true prophet, because if the Book were not from *Allah*, surely it would not have such content.

A more astonishing matter is that according to the above mentioned narration, whenever the Prophet ***(p.b.u.h.)*** saw 'Abdullah-ibn-Ummi-Maktūm, he remembered the occasion and honoured him very much.

The other aspect, which the verses contain, is that of the Islamic culture in relation to the behaviour shown to the oppressed and to the arrogant: as to how it considers the blind, poor believer in comparison to those rich, powerful pagan Arab leaders. This clearly shows that Islam is a support for the oppressed and is against the arrogant.

In conclusion, we repeat that though the first thought about the occasion of this revelation is well-known among the commentators, it should be confessed that there is nothing vivid, in the verse, to prove the idea that the Prophet *(p.b.u.h.)* is the clear target of the admonition.

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### *Commentary:*

***Harsh Admonition for Heedlessness Shown to a Truth-seeking Blind Man.***

Keeping in mind what was said about the first idea regarding the occasion of revelation of the verses, we will now discuss the given commentary.

*"He frowned and turned away ."*

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*"Because there came to him the blind man".*

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*"And what would make you know that he might (spiritually) purify himself".*

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*" Or become reminded so that the reminder might profit him? "*

The reminder can be, at least, an advice to him. If it does not affect him to be really virtuous, it may make him aware and this awareness would change him a little.

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*"As to one who regards himself as self-sufficient"*

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*"To him do you address yourself!"*

And 'you' insist on guiding him, but he is entangled with pride due to his wealth and selfishness. It is the pride from which rebellion and

disobedience originate, as **Sura 'Alaq, No. 96, verses 6-7** say: *"Nay, most surely man does transgress (all bounds)," "For he thinks himself self-sufficient."*

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*"Though it is no blame on you if he would not (spiritually) purify himself".*

It is for 'you' only to deliver His message; they may take its advice or merely become annoyed. Therefore, you should not neglect the truth-seeking blind man or annoy him for the sake of the rich leaders, although you mean to guide them.

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*"But as to him who comes to you striving hard,"*

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*"And he fears (Allah in his heart)"*

The very motive, fear of *Allah*, has forced him to come to you in order to hear some truth and, thereafter, employ them in order to purify himself and grow in understanding.

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*"Of him wast thou unmindful."*

Indeed, the term /anta/ ***'you, thee'*** is used to say that a person, such as the Prophet, should not divert himself, even for a moment, from such a truth-seeking man and should not pay attention to others although he definitely wanted to guide them, because the priority is given to that of the pure-hearted oppressed.

In any case, this reproachful speech, whether to the Prophet ***(p.b.u.h.)*** or to anyone else, clearly states the fact that ***Islam*** and ***the Qur'an*** give a special high regard to the servants of *Allah*, particularly to those of the oppressed.

Also, Islam takes a severe position against those who are intoxicated and become proud from the abundance of *Allah's* blessings, so much so that *Allah* is not content if the least annoyance is caused to the truth-seeking oppressed, because of giving attention to the affluent.

The reason is clear: such a message works first amongst the simple and lowly, the poor and despised folk, and the mighty ones, of the earth, only come around when the masses stream in like an irresistible force.

The oppressed always support Islam, sincerely, helping the great leaders of the religion in their affairs, and are the candidates of the battle fields for martyrdom. As Imam Ali (*p.b.u.h.*) said in his famous order to Mālik-i-Ashtar: "*... While the common men, the poor and apparently the less important section of your subjects are the pillars of Islam; they are the real assemblage of Muslims and the power and defensive force against the enemies of Islam. Keep an open mind for them, be more friendly with them and secure their confidence and sympathy.*"

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# Sura 'Abasa
## (He Frowned)

**No. 80 (verses 11-23)**

١١ كَلَّآ إِنَّهَا تَذْكِرَةٌ ○
١٢ فَمَنْ شَآءَ ذَكَرَهُ ○
١٣ فِى صُحُفٍ مُّكَرَّمَةٍ ○
١٤ مَّرْفُوعَةٍ مُّطَهَّرَةٍ ○
١٥ بِأَيْدِى سَفَرَةٍ ○
١٦ كِرَامٍ بَرَرَةٍ ○
١٧ قُتِلَ الْإِنسَانُ مَآ أَكْفَرَهُ ○
١٨ مِنْ أَىِّ شَىْءٍ خَلَقَهُ ○
١٩ مِن نُّطْفَةٍ خَلَقَهُ فَقَدَّرَهُ ○
٢٠ ثُمَّ السَّبِيلَ يَسَّرَهُ ○
٢١ ثُمَّ أَمَاتَهُ فَأَقْبَرَهُ ○
٢٢ ثُمَّ إِذَا شَآءَ أَنشَرَهُ ○
٢٣ كَلَّا لَمَّا يَقْضِ مَآ أَمَرَهُ ○

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# Sura 'Abasa
## (He Frowned)
### No. 80 (verses 11-23)

*11. "Nay surely it is an admonishment,"*

*12. "So let him who pleases mind it,"*

*13. "(It is) in Books held (greatly) in honour,"*

*14. "Exalted (in dignity) kept pure and holy,"*

*15. "In the hand of scribes,"*

*16. "Honourable and pious and just,"*

*17. "Cursed be man! how ungrateful is he!"*

*18. "Of what thing did He create him?"*

*19. "Of a sperm-drop He created him, then moulded him in due proportions;"*

*20. "Then He made the way easy for him,"*

*21. "Then He caused him to die, then assigned to him a grave,"*

*22. "Then, when it is His will, He will raise him to life again,"*

*23. "Nay, but (man) has not done what He commanded him."*

**Commentary:**

***Only the Purified Ones Can Touch the Qur'an.***

In connection with the aforementioned verses, which spoke about admonishing the one who was unmindful of a truth-seeking blind man, these verses are about the importance of the Qur'an, its pure origin, and the efficient effect it has on individuals.

Advising the one who was unmindful not to repeat this action again, it says: "*Nay, surely it is an admonishment.*"

'You' do not need to pay attention to those who are, apparently, gifted and self-sufficient and are, subsequently, proud, while neglecting the purified oppressed.

It, is, also probable that the verse: "*Nay, surely it is an admonishment*" could be an answer to all accusations the pagans and the

enemies of Islam uttered about the Qur'an. They called it '***a poetry***', '***a magic***', and sometimes '***a kind of soothsaying***'. The Qur'an demands that none of them are right, but that these verses of Qur'an are reminders for acknowledgment, awareness and faith. It contains the proofs and documents in itself. The people who approach it can get the facts, themselves, except its enemies.

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***"So let him who pleases, mind it".***

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This points to both the lack of obligation, and an evidence to exercise of free-will for everyone – that is, no one can obtain its merits unless one wishes to and makes the decision to follow its guidance.

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***"(It is) in Books held (greatly) in honour,".***

The term /suhuf/ is the plural form of / sahīfah / which means '***tablet***' or '***sheet***' or '***anything on which something can be written***'. This shows that the verses of Qur'an had been written on some tablets before they were revealed to the Prophet ***(p.b.u.h.),*** and the angels of revelation possessed them, therefore, it means that the tablets were in a very high position.

Some views have held that /suhuf/ means '***the Books of earlier prophets (p.b.u.th.),***' which does not seem agreeable with its pre and post verses. Some have also said that it means '***the Preserved Tablet***', but this idea does not seem suitable, either, because /suhuf/ is in a plural form and has not been used in the form of '***the Preserved Tablet***'.

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***"Exalted (in dignity) kept pure and holy".***

It is beyond the reach of the aberrant ones; they cannot distort it; it is pure and kept far from tainted hands. Finally, it is pure from any contradiction, discrepancy and doubt.

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Moreover, they are: ***"In the hand of scribes,"***

who are: ***"Honourable and pious and just."***

The term /safarah/ is the plural form of / safīr / based on /safar/, which originally means '***to unveil a matter or a thing***', so, one who comes unto people with a special mission; to remove their difficulties and uncover the ambiguous matters for them is called /safīr/ '***an ambassador***'. A writer is also called /safīr/ since he or she uncovers the meaning of a matter.

Therefore, /safarah/ means ***'the Divine angels who reveal Messages or write them down'.***

A narration from Imam Sādiq (***p.b.u.h.***) says: "***One who learns the whole Qur'an by heart and acts accordingly is with the scribes, honourable and pious and just***".

This clearly shows that those who know the Qur'an by heart, commentators, and those who act according to its instructions are in the same rank as the scribes. And it is a fact that when scholars and those who learn the Qur'an by heart, or preserve it, do something similar to what the angels and bringers of revelation do, then, they should be counted among them.

It is understood that, on the whole, any Muslim who tries to protect and keep the ***Holy Qur'an*** alive deserves a position as high as that of the '***honourable and pious angels***'.

The term / kirām / is the plural form of / karīm / which means '***honourable, or beneficent***' and refers to the greatness of the angels of revelation. It is sometimes said that it refers to their pureness of any sin, as **Sura Anbiyā', No. 21, verses 26-27** say about the angels: "***...Nay, they are honoured servants,***" "***They do not precede Him in speech and (only) according to His commandment do they act***".

The term /bararah/ is the plural form of /bār/ based on /bar/ which originally means '***vastness***', then, '***a vast land***' is called /barr/, and since good people's generosity is vast and benefits many others, they are called /bār/.

The term '***pious***' used in this verse, of course, means '***obedient to His Command***' and '***sinlessness***'. Thus *Allah* characterizes the angels in three ways: first, they are His agents for His revelations; second, they are naturally pious and honourable; and third, they are pure, obedient and sinless.

Though there are so many signs of guidance from *Allah* in His ***'Books held (greatly) in honour'*** containing all kinds of reminders revealed by the angels, the ungrateful Man does not resign himself to Him, hence, it says: ***"Cursed be man! how ungrateful is he!"***

The term /kufr/, may mean '***disbelief***' or '***ingratitude***' or '***any covering and denial of Allah***', which can be suitable, here, because, in the last verses it refers to the signs of guidance and faithfulness, and in the next verses it mentions the different kinds of blessings from *Allah*.

In any case, the objective point of ***"Cursed be man!"*** is to express an intensive hatred toward the ungrateful ones.

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Since the origin of disobedience and ungratefulness is generally pride, then to break it, the next verse says:

***"Of what thing did He create him?"***

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***"Of a sperm-drop He created him, then moulded him in due proportions".***

Why does Man not think about the origin of his creation? Why does he forget his main source? Moreover, why does he not take note of *Allah's* ability in the creation of this strange creature from a sperm-drop? If he contemplated on his creation from a sperm-drop and, then, about the formation of his body and its limbs, and his faculties and abilities and even his necessities of life being in a suitable proportion, it could be the best guidance for his theological and divine knowledge.

The term / qaddarahū /, ***'He moulded him in due proportions'*** is based on /taqdīr/ which means '***the act of measuring and well-balancing***'.

We know that there are more than twenty metals and metalloids in the human body, each of which is at a determined level from the point of quantity and quality. If these levels change to a lower or a higher degree, the regularity of the body's chemistry will be disturbed. Besides this, the condition of the body's structure and the relations between its organs, have exact limits. The intellect and instincts hidden in an individual, alone, and in human beings, all together, must be in a special arrangement to provide for Man's happiness.

*Allah* is He Who fulfilled all the above proportions for the worthless life-germ in the form of a sperm-drop. The life-germ is so small that if we gathered, together, as many of them as the number of human beings, which exists today, they would not amount to a thimbleful. Yes, He designed so many colorful characteristics and embellishments on and in such a slight, tiny particle, and from this created a creature such as ***Man***.

The term / taqdīr / has been defined as: '***to make ready***' by some commentators. It is also probable that the meaning of / taqdīr / is '***to make the unworthy life-germ powerful***'. How great is the Creator Who makes this feable substance so powerful; Who puts the sky, the earth and the seas at his disposal, and enables him to conquer all the forces of his surroundings.

Of course, all three of the above comments can be considered, together, also.

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"***Then He made the way easy for him***".

*Allah* made the way for the foetus to develop in its mother's womb, and then made the way for moving to this world, easy for Man.

One of the wonders of Man's birth is that a few moments before the time of nativity the child is so located in the mother's womb that usually its head is right side up, its face is to the mother's back and its feet are toward the down side of the womb; but when the time of birth comes, the child turns upside down so that its head is downwards, and this very position makes the birth easier for both the child and its mother. There are, of course, exceptions where some children are born under various complications and, therefore, their mothers encounter many difficulties.

*Allah* has made everything easy for him: after his birth he grows during his childhood, then his human instincts grow, and after that he grows along the path of faith and spiritual perfection by way of guidance from the prophets ***(p.b.u.th.)*** and by his own reasoning.

"***Then He made the way easy for him***". What a completely meaningful and interesting sentence this is! It is very short, but it alludes to so many facts!

Another point which is noteworthy is that it says: "***Then He made the way easy for him***". It does not say: 'Then He forced him to go the way'. This is an emphasis, again, on Man's free-will.

Further, it declares the end of Man's life and says: "***Then He caused him to die, then assigned to him a grave***".

Surely, the act of '***putting to death***' belongs to *Allah*, but the act of covering the corpse, in a grave, apparently belongs to Man, however, the required intelligence, for this action and, also, the other necessary means for it have been supplied by *Allah*, and that is why the assigning of a grave has been attributed to *Allah*, too.

Some commentators have also said that the objective point of attributing the action to *Allah* is that He has created a grave for Man which is under the ground, while some others have thought of it as a religious instruction, from *Allah*, about the burial of corpses.

One of the graces of *Allah* to human beings is the very burial of corpses. If they did not know what to do with their corpses or if there were not any instructions issued about the burial of corpses, the corpses would humiliatingly remain putrid on the ground, and the beasts and birds would feast on them, which would be a horrible debasement. Therefore, *Allah*'s graces are bestowed on Man; not only during his life time, but even after his death.

Moreover, the instruction for burying the corpses of people (after the ceremonial bath, shroud, and prayer) is an inspirational one, because it is to say that the dead bodies of human beings must be purified and respected, even more than their live ones, because live people have the responsibility of keeping themselves pure.

Another noteworthy point is that the situation of death, in this verse, is counted among the blessings of *Allah*. This is really true if we care to understand, because, first, death is a release from the troubles and imperfections of this world and a close to the probationary period, after which will dawn the full ***Reality*** in a world so much broader than this world. Secondly, the death of the present generations makes room for the later generations, and causes Mankind to continue to live and to improve, or else the human population would reach such extremes that would be impossible for them to live on Earth.

It is interesting that this very idea is delicately mentioned in **Sura Rahman, No. 55, verses 26-28** thus:

***"Everything on earth will pass away;" "And there will endure the Face of your Lord, the Lord of Glory and Honour." "Then which of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?".***

There, again, according to these verses, death is one of the great gifts from *Allah*.

Yes, the world, with all its blessings, is a prison for a believer. Moving from this world to the next world is a release from this prison. Besides, the abundance of blessings, in this world, sometimes causes people to neglect their position, then, the rememberance of death may awaken them, therefore, from this point of view, too, it is a blessing. If all of the past events of life were always alive, it would certainly be tiresome to continue it, but the immortal life, on the contrary, will be thoroughly full of joy and happiness.

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Then, our attention is turned to the ***Rusurrection*** of the human race, and, it says: ***"Then when it is His will, He will raise him to life again."***

The term / inšaraha / is based on / inšār / which means ***'to spread abroad after gathering'***. It is an interesting point which shows that the life of Man is totally gathered up by death, but it will be spread out, again, through ***Resurrection*** in a higher and greater environment.

It is worthy to note that for ***'death'*** and for ***'burial'*** it says: ***"Then He caused him to die, then assigned to him a grave"***, but for ***Resurrection*** it says: ***"When it is His will, He will raise him to life again"*** and this makes it clear that no one knows the time of the Great Event ***(The Resurrection)***, but, it is only *Allah* Who knows it, and death is an inevitable event where everyone, after living a willy-nilly natural life, will die.

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The last verse of this group says that although these blessings and stages have been provided by *Allah*'s grace, for the good of Man, (from the time he was a lowly sperm-drop to the time he arrived in this world and went on the path of growth and, finally, passed away and was covered with dust in the grave), unregenerate Man fails in carrying out the purpose of his creation and life:

***"Nay, but (man) has not done what He commanded him".***

The term / lammā / is usually used with a negative meaning when

something is still expected. It touches on this sense that Man, having these divine gifts and the means of guidance, is expected to be earnest in obeying *Allah* and acting on His commands, but surprisingly he has not done it yet.

The following are two different ideas about the meaning of the term '***man***' used in this verse:

The first idea says that it alludes to the persons who go the path of ungratefulness, denial, and injustice and corresponds with **Sura Ibrāhīm, No.14, verse 34** which says: "*... most surely man is very unjust, very ungrateful.*"

The second idea says that it refers to all of Mankind, because no one (irrespective of believers and unbelievers) has accurately carried out what *Allah* has commanded him to do, to the extent that it deserves the greatness of His glory and dignity; as a Persian poem says:

**Servants of Allah should ask Him to excuse them**
**for their short comings.**
**Else, no one is able to do according to His Lordship.**

# Sura 'Abasa
## (He Frowned)
### No. 80 (verses 24-32)

٢٤ فَلْيَنْظُرِ الْاِنْسَانُ اِلٰى طَعَامِهٖ ○
٢٥ اَنَّا صَبَبْنَا الْمَاۤءَ صَبًّا ○
٢٦ ثُمَّ شَقَقْنَا الْاَرْضَ شَقًّا ○
٢٧ فَاَنْۢبَتْنَا فِيْهَا حَبًّا ○
٢٨ وَعِنَبًا وَّقَضْبًا ○
٢٩ وَّزَيْتُوْنًا وَّنَخْلًا ○
٣٠ وَّحَدَآئِقَ غُلْبًا ○
٣١ وَّفَاكِهَةً وَّاَبًّا ○
٣٢ مَّتَاعًا لَّكُمْ وَلِاَنْعَامِكُمْ ○

*24. "Then let man look to his food,"*
*25. "That We pour down the water, pouring it in abundance,"*
*26. "And We split the earth into fragments,"*
*27. "And We produce therein corn,"*
*28. "And grapes and grasses,"*
*29. "And the olive and the palm,"*
*30. "And gardens, dense with trees,"*
*31. "And fruits and fodder,"*
*32. "Provision for you and for your cattle."*

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***Commentary:***

***Man should look at his food!***

Since the aforementioned verses allude to the ***Resurrection*** and the next verses also refer more vividly to this very matter, it seems that these verses are a proof for the ***Resurrection***. By explaining *Allah's* authority over all things and, also, reviving the dead lands by sending down rain, which is a resurrection in itself for plants, proves the possibility of ***Resurrection***.

By the way, since these verses mention the different kinds of nourishment that *Allah* has given to Man and his cattle, they call him to thank *Allah* and pay heed to the knowledge of Him.

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First, it says: "***Then let man look to his food;***" and considers how *Allah* has produced it.

The closest exterior substance, to Man, is his food which, after some changes, is easily absorbed and becomes part of his body, therefore, if he cannot obtain it he will perish. That is why the Qur'an, among all things, puts emphasis on the nourishment; especially those produced from trees and plants.

It is clear that the aim of saying '***look to***' is not a simple look, but it means with deep care and contemplating on the vital elements and wonderful structure of the nourishment, and the surprising effects they have on him, so, consequently, he should think about the Creator, Who has created them.[1]

There is the idea which says that it may mean '***a superficial look, a look which stimulates the salivary glands and, as a result, helps the digestion***'. This seems improbable because, in comparison with its pre and post verses, the verse does not carry such a meaning at all; but some food scientists look at the contents of the Qur'an with their own narrow view points, then, it is natural for them to have an idea like that about the verse.

Some others believe it to mean that when one sits at the table to eat, one must look carefully at the foods to see how they are prepared;

1 The term /fal-yanzur/ may originally mean that 'if Man is in doubt of his Creator and the Resurrection, then let him look to his food'.

whether they are permitted or forbidden, lawful or unlawful and, thus, one may consider the moral and religious aspects in eating.

In some narrations from the sinless Imams, the term / ta' ām / '*food*', here, means '***knowledge***', the sustenance of Man's soul, then, one should be careful and '***look***' at Whom he has taken it from. Among these is a narration from Imam Mohammad Bāqir (***p.b.u.h.***) for the commentary of the above vese which says: "***Be careful from where and from whom you get your information.***"

Another narration, similar to this, has been quoted from Imam Sādiq (***p.b.u.h.***).

Undoubtedly, the apparent meaning of the verse is about the bodily foods which are described in later verses, but the soul's sustenance can analogically be understood from it, since Man is a combination of soul and body; as his body needs bodily food so his soul requires spiritual sustenance, as well.

When Man should be careful about his bodily nourishment, and knows of its origin which, according to the next verses, is life-giving rain, he should also be careful about his spiritual nourishment, the Message revealed from above (like rain) to the Prophet's heart (***p.b.u.h.***). The very place where the hearts of the sinless Imams got it from and store it like fountains of youth for others to make their own hearts fruitful with faith, virtue and morals.

Yes, one must completely be aware of the main origin of one's knowledge or one may call it '***spiritual nourishment***', lest it may come from a corrupted source and, as a result, cause one's soul and body to become sick or die.

And the matter of things being lawful /halāl/ or unlawful, /harām/, and permitted or forbidden can anologically be understood through the potential guidance, too.

This is also probable that the terms 'food' and 'look' both have vast meanings in this verse, hence all the three above commentaries can be gathered in it.

It is evident that the term '***man***,' used in the verse, includes all members of the human race whether they are believers or unbelievers. They must care about what they eat and, also, the wonder of its creation in order for the unbelievers, to find the right way, and for the believers to increase in their faith.

Verily, each article of food: fruits, nutritious seeds, and vegetables have some interesting properties which can be studied, separately, in our lifetime and many things can be learned from them to enlighten us and give us insight into the wonders that they contain.

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Then, to explain the nourishments and their origins, it says:

***"That We pour down the water, pouring it in abundance".***

The term /sab/ means '***to pour water over from above***', and here it means '***sending down rain***'. The term /sabbā/, at the end of the verse, is used for emphasis and to note the abundance of water.

Water, which is very necessary for every living creature, often comes down sufficiently, because of *Allah's* grace. And we know that the essential source of water existing in rivers, streams, springs, subterranean canals and wells is rain, so that if it does not rain one year, all of them will dry up.

Thus, while studying articles of food, first and foremost, Man should refer to the importance of the regularity of rainfall. The sun shines over the seas where vapour, in the form of clouds, rises from and moves above the earth where winds scatter the clouds high in the sky. At cold points in the atmosphere, the clouds change into pure, harmless water again and fall gently on the ground in the form of droplets of rain or little pieces of snow that soak into the ground. Trees, plants and living things draw up water from the ground.

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After mentioning water, which is an important factor in human life, it refers to another great factor; the earth, and says:

***"And We split the earth in fragments".***

Many commentators have said that this splitting is the splitting of the land by plant seedlings. It is really wonderful that a little smooth seedling can break the hard, solid land and sometimes it shoots up through stone. What a surprising power the Creator has given to this tiny smooth seedling which enables it to do so!

Some others have said that the split may be the splitting of the land when man ploughs it or even when some worms burrow through it; a kind of ploughing for the purpose of some other life activities.

Ploughing is one of Man's activities, of course, but *Allah* has given him all its necessary means, therefore it relates to *Allah*.

The third commentary, which has been cited for the verse, and seems preferable for certain considerations, says that the meaning of '***splitting the earth***' is '***the act of breaking the stone into pieces on the surface of the earth.***'

***Explanation:***

At first the surface of the earth was covered with a mass of stone. Heavy rains fell, continuously, and cleft the stone asunder and spread its little parts onto the low lands and, thus, a mass of agricultural soil was formed, some of which is now carried to the seas by floods. But the new soil, produced by the succeeding rain and snow was replaced by it, otherwise Man would be faced with the lack of agricultural soil.

Then, the verse points to one of the miracles of the Qur'an, in science, when it says it rains, first, then the earth cleaves asunder and becomes fit for farming. This not only happened in the very early days, but also keeps occurring today.

This commentary seems more suitable, because the growth of plants and the production of grains are mentioned in the next verses.

Here, again, all three commentaries, together, can be probable.

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After mentioning the two basic factors; i.e. water and soil, it refers to the eight items of plants which contain the main nutrients for Man and cattle. ***"And We produce therein corn,"***.

Corn /habba/ is '***grain, the seeds of cereal grass***; ***wheat, oats, rye or barely, or the plants producing them***'. They are the essential sources of Man's and cattle's nourishments during the year, the lack of which, because of drought, causes famine and starvation, a great plague for the world.

The term /habban/ '***corn***', in a general sense, shows the importance and the variety of the seeds. Some others have only meant it as '***wheat***' or '***rye***' which is not reasonable, because the term '***corn***' can include all seeds, which was mentioned before.

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*"And grapes and grasses"*

The term / 'inab /, which means both *'grapes and vine'*, in the verses of Qur'an, is mentioned, here, because it contains many nutrients, as a complete food and more than other fruits. It means only grapes in this verse.

The term /qaðb/ originally means *'the vegetables which are cut several times'*, and, here, it means the different kinds of vegetables. Its occurrence after the term '*grapes*' is for its importance as a food material.

Today, vegetables enjoy a high position in food science and are especially recommended.

The term /qaðb/ is sometimes used with the meaning of *'to cut, or to pick'*.

It is probable that /qaðb/, used, here, in this verse, has a broader meaning which includes both vegetables and fruits.

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*"And the olive and the palm".*

It is clear that these two items are both from the most important articles of food which are useful, sound, and nutritious. This is why they are mentioned and emphasized on, here.

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*"And gardens, dense with trees".*

The term / hadā 'iq / is the plural form of / hadīqah / which is *'a garden surrounded by a wall'*, but originally it means *'a piece of land containing water for irrigation'*. The word is derived from /hadaqah/ *'eye-socket'* where water exists, constantly.

Since these kinds of gardens are usually fruit gardens, the word may hint to the kinds of fruits in Heaven.

The term /ḍulb/ is the plural form of /aḍlab/ and /ḍulbā '/ which means *'thick-necked'* and is originally derived from /ḍalabah/. Here, it means *'tall, thick trees'*.

*"And fruits and fodder".*

The term /abb/ means *'herbage not sown by men'* or *'herbage prepared for pasture and for cutting'*. Basically it means *'preparation'* and, since these pastures are prepared for the usage, so, they are called /abb/.

Some others have also said that /abb/ is used for the fruits that are suitable for drying and storing to be used in winter, because they are always ready for use.

The late Mufīd in his book, Irshād, has narrated from Amir-al-Mo'mineen Ali *(p.b.u.h.)* that the word meant '***herbage as a pasture***', and he added: "***What God said in the verse 'And fruits and fodder' is a divine gift for His servants that He created as a part of their food and for their cattle, from which their lives receive merit and their bodies are strengthened***".[1]

In the former verses some special fruits were named, while here fruits, in general, are discussed. Moreover, the last verse spoke about '***gardens***' which seemed to mean '***the fruits of gardens***', then, how are the fruits dealt with, here, again?

The answer to this question is this: There, some definite fruits such as grapes, olives, and dates, which are of great importance among all fruits, were named; but, here, fruits are mentioned separate from '***gardens***', perhaps because, besides fruits, gardens have some more advantages, such as, fresh air, nice views, etc.

Moreover, the leaves of some trees and the twigs, the roots, and the barks of some others (for example: tea, cinnamon, ginger and the like) are among the edibles; in addition to the leaves of many trees which are suitable food for cattle. And it is a fact that the items stated in the aforementioned verses are edible for both human beings as well as their cattle.

For this reason, in the next verse, it says:

"***Provision for you and for your cattle.***"

The term / matā'/ means '***anything that Man uses or enjoys***'.

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1 Irshād-i-Mufīd, from Al-Mīzān, vol. 20, p. 319.

***Explanation:***

***Wholesome Nutriments***

There are eight nutriments named, in these verses, for Man and cattle. It is interesting that all of them are from herbages and that is because of the importance of vegetables, grains and fruits in Man's diet, so, in other words, they are the true original nutriments, while meat, obtained from animals, is in the second position and in a lesser amount.

Also noteworthy is that food science, which is one of the wide spread and important sciences and has a broad field with a large scope of investigation, is an explanation for what is mentioned in these verses and shows the magnificence of the Holy Qur'an, especially when this science emphasizes on the value and the efficiency of these food materials.

In any case, taking note of these materials and thinking about the creator of them may cause Man's awareness of *Allah's* grace and mercy to Mankind.

Yes, paying attention to ones bodily food and, then, the sustenance of the soul from the points of both its structural content and how one obtained it, can push one forward along the path of knowledge of *Allah*, righteousness, and self-perfection. Verily, ***"Then let man look to his food"***, and what a meaningful sentence this short, single statement is!

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# Sura 'Abasa
## (He Frowned)

**No. 80 (verses 33-42)**

٣٣ فَإِذَا جَاءَتِ الصَّاخَّةُ ○

٣٤ يَوْمَ يَفِرُّ الْمَرْءُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ ○

٣٥ وَأُمِّهِ وَأَبِيهِ ○

٣٦ وَصَاحِبَتِهِ وَبَنِيهِ ○

٣٧ لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ مِنْهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ شَأْنٌ يُغْنِيهِ ○

٣٨ وُجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ مُسْفِرَةٌ ○

٣٩ ضَاحِكَةٌ مُسْتَبْشِرَةٌ ○

٤٠ وَوُجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَلَيْهَا غَبَرَةٌ ○

٤١ تَرْهَقُهَا قَتَرَةٌ ○

٤٢ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْكَفَرَةُ الْفَجَرَةُ ○

*33. "And when the deafening cry comes,"*

*34. "The Day on which a man shall flee from his brother,"*

*35. "And his mother and his father,"*

*36. "And from his wife and his children,"*

*37. "Each one of them, That Day, will have concern enough to occupy him."*

*38. "Some faces That Day will be bright,"*

*39. "Laughing, rejoicing".*

*40. "And some faces That Day will be dust-stained,"*

*41. "Blackness will cover them:"*

*42. "Those are they who are disbelievers, the wicked."*

***Commentary:***

***The Resurrection Cry!***

After describing a notable number of divine gifts and worldly blessings, the theme changes to talk about the resurrection and some of its happenings as well as the end of the believers and unbelievers. The purpose in this is to say that, firstly, these gifts, whatever they are, will have an end sometime; and secondly, they are some signs to prove the existence of *Allah's* authority which is over everything and, of course, over the ***Resurrection.***

***"And when the deafening cry comes,"***

The term /sāxah/ is based on /sax/ which originally means '***a very loud noise***', so loud that it almost deafens the ears, or actually deafens them. It points, here, to the second sound of the blast of the trumpet, the very great cry which brings the dead to life again and makes them go forth to the gathering place for the ***final Judgment.***

Verily, the cry is so loud and shocking that everyone forgets all but one's end resulting from one's own actions.

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***"The Day on which a man shall flee from his brother".***

The same brother who was loved sincerely, was helped in everything favourably, now he flees from that brother, abruptly.

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***"And his mother and his father,"***

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***"And from his wife and his children".***

Thus, individuals not only leave the nearest and the dearest members of their family such as their brother, father, mother, wife, and children, but also flee from them. This statement shows that the horror and the fear of the *Day* is so much so that it makes individuals cease all their wishes and affections. In the probationary life, mother was loved by her child very much; father was highly respected by his son; wife was eagerly beloved by her husband; children were the best for their father,

as the apples of his eyes; but now, in the eternal life, one flees from all of them!

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The reason why he flees from them is stated in the next verse.

***"Each one of them, That Day, will have concern enough to occupy him".***

The term /yuqnīh/ '***makes him self-sufficient***' shows that on ***That Day,*** Man is so busy with his affairs that he does not pay attention to anyone; and the events are so terrible and overwhelming as to occupy him and his mind, totally.

It has been narrated that some of the households of the Prophet ***(p.b.u.h.)*** asked him if one would remember one's close friend on ***That Day***, and he answered: ***"There are three halting-places where no one remembers anyone. The first place is where the acts are weighed to see whether they are heavy (worthy) or light (unworthy); then, it is on the path where he wonders whether he can pass it (successfully) or not; and then it is the time when he is given his Record to see whether it is given to his right hand or to his left hand. In these three halting-places no one cares for any one else: his supporter, his comrade, his companion, his very true friend, his child, his parents, and this is the same thing that Allah says: 'Each one of them, That Day, will have concern enough to occupy him' ".***[1]

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Then the situation of the believers and unbelievers is described when it says:

***"Some faces That Day will be bright".***

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***"Laughing, rejoicing",***

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***"And some faces That Day will be dust-stained,"***

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***"Blackness will cover them".***

The term /musfirah/ is based on /asfār/ which means '***to appear, or***

1 Borhān, Commentary, vol. 4, p. 439.

*to glitter*' like the light of the early morning at the end of the darkness of night; the term /qabarah/ is based on /qabār/ which means '*dust*'; the term /qatarah/ originally is based on /qatār/ which means '*smoke*'; the term /kafarah/ and the term /fajarah/ are the plural forms of /kāfir/ '*a disbeliever from the point of view of belief*' and /fājir/ '*a sinner from the point of view of action*'.

The look on the face shows the inner self (mood), both physically and spiritually, good or bad.

It is understood from the verse that on ***That Day*** the faces show the righteousness or wickedness of persons during their lives in this world.

The dust on the faces of the sinners will be in contrast to the beaming light on the faces of the righteous; and the blackness (*smoke*) of the faces of sinners, who are sad and regretful, in contrast to the '*laughing, rejoicing*' faces of the righteous.

On the whole, on ***That Day***, the faces show the facts and it is enough to look at the faces to know who is a sinner and who is righteous; as it is said in **Sura Raḥmān, No. 55, verse 41**: "*(For) the sinners will be known by their faces*".

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***Explanation:***

*SELF-PERFECTION:*

The ideas set forth in the short and meaningful verses, of this Sura, are a good collection for individuals to use as a guidance to self-perfection.

1. On the one hand, it leads Man to refer to the origin of his creation to understand how he was created from a lowly sperm-drop in order that he should not be proud, because one of the greatest hindrances on the path of self-perfection is pride.

2. On the other hand, it introduces the divine leadership to Man as the best provision of his way including both the Prophet's guidance, originating from revelation, and the guidance led by rational thinking and the observation in the regularity of the created world.

3. Then, it orders Man to look to his food to see how it is created and prepared for him by the ***Beneficent*** and the ***Merciful Creator***, and then, to obey Him in humility. Man should be careful to obtain his food, lawfully, because pure and lawful food is an important basis for self-perfection.

4. When he must be careful about his bodily food, then, he should certainly be careful about his soul's sustenance to see that it is not from a corrupted source; that which threatens his spiritual life.

It is surprising that some people are seriously careful about their bodily food, but they do not take care about their soul's sustenance; they read any book and they learn the tutorship of any misleading education and observe no limits or conditions for the sustenance of their soul.

There is a narration from Amir-al-Mo'mineen Ali ***(p.b.u.h.)*** that says: " ***Why, I see that people light a lamp at night to watch what kind of food they eat, but they do not mind what is the sustenance of their soul. They do not enlighten their mind by (the) rational knowledge, if they do they will be safe from the bad results of ignorance and sinfulness in their beliefs and deeds.***" [1]

His son Imam Hassan- Mujtabā (***p.b.u.h.***) also said something along these lines: "***I wonder at some people who think about their bodily food, but do not care for their soul's sustenance. They avoid eating harmful food, but fill their hearts with fatal materials.***" [2]

5. One should remember that the ***Deafening Cry*** will raise up all from their graves, and everyone will be faced with one's Record. Then, the circumstances, there, will be so awful that one will forget all of one's dearest beloved. One should think about one's acts whether they be so

1 Safīnat-ul-Bihār, vol. 2, p. 84.

2 Ibid.

good that one will deserve to have a '***laughing, rejoicing***' and bright face ***That Day,*** or whether one will have an ugly, black and frowning face, then, and thus, will cause oneself to prepare for that ***Day.***

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***Supplication:***

***O Lord! Make each of us successful in self-perfection.***
***O Lord! Do not deprive us from a good sustenance for our spirits.***
***O Lord! Make us conscious of our duties to fulfill them before the occurrence of the deafening Cry!***

The End

Sura 'Abasa
(He Frowned)

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

# Sura Takwir
# (The Folding Up)

*No. 81 (29 Verses)*

***Contents of the Sura:***

This Sura is amomg the Meccan Suras and there is a variety of evidence to verify this fact. For instance, the Sura denotes that the enemies of the Prophet ***(p.b.u.h.)*** called him mad and this treatment used to happen in the early periods of his prophecy in Mecca, when his enemies did not take his statements seriously and were quite careless about them.

This Sura can be divided into mainly two themes:

The first theme is pointed out in the beginning verses of the Sura; those which contain the signs about the ***Hereafter*** and the occurrence of some great changes regarding the end of this world and the beginning of the Next World; the ***Resurrection.***

The second theme is in a mystical passage showing how the Great Qur'anic Revelation was true, and was revealed through the angel Gabriel, and which has a remarkable effect on Man's soul for his spiritual guidance. This part is accompanied by some enlightening oaths; full of meaning.

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### *The Virtue in Studying Sura Takwīr:*

There are many traditions narrated about the importance of this Sura and studying it, such as a tradition from the Prophet ***(p.b.u.h.)*** that says: ***" He who studies Sura ' Takwīr ' (The Folding Up) will be saved by Allah from being exposed to shame when the book of deeds will be laid open."***[1]

Another tradition from the Prophet ***(p.b.u.h.)*** says: ***"He who wishes to look at me on the Day of Judgement, should study Sura Takwīr (The Folding Up)".***[2]

The tradition has also been narrated in another form, which says: ***"He whose looking at the Hereafter makes him glad (as if he sees it), studies Sura ' Takwīr ' (The Folding Up) , ' Infitār ' (Cleaving Asunder), and 'Inshiqāq ' (The Rending Asunder)."*** (Since, in these Suras, the signs of the ***Hereafter*** are illustrated so clearly that the reciter of them feels that the scene of the ***Hereafter*** is in front of him).[3]

It is narrated that the Prophet ***(p.b.u.h)*** was asked why he had grown old so early and he answered : ***" Hud, Wāqi'ah, Mursalāt and Naba' made me old".*** (The reason is that the horrible events of the ***Hereafter*** are so clearly illustrated in them that it makes every conscious person prematurely old).[4]

It is also narrated from Imam Sādiq who said: ***"He who studies Sura 'Abasa and Takwīr will be with the Mercy and Grace of Allah in the eternal Heaven and this is easy for Him when He wills."***[5]

The items mentioned in this narration vividly show that the goal, by recitation, is to produce knowledge, faith, and action in the reciter.

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1 Majma'-al-Bayān, vol. 10, p. 441.

2 Ibid.

3 Qartabī, The Commentary, vol. 10, p. 7017.

4 Nūr-uth-Thaqalayn, vol. 5, p. 513.

5 Thawāb-ul-a'māl, according to what is cited in the quotation of Nūr-uth-Thaqalayn, vol. 5, p. 512.

# Sura Takwir
## (The Folding Up)

*No. 81 (verses 1-9)*

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

١ اِذَاالشَّمْسُ كُوِّرَتْ ○

٢ وَاِذَاالنُّجُوْمُ انْكَدَرَتْ ○

٣ وَاِذَاالْجِبَالُ سُيِّرَتْ ○

٤ وَاِذَاالْعِشَارُ عُطِّلَتْ ○

٥ وَاِذَاالْوُحُوْشُ حُشِرَتْ ○

٦ وَاِذَاالْبِحَارُ سُجِّرَتْ ○

٧ وَاِذَا النُّفُوْسُ زُوِّجَتْ ○

٨ وَاِذَاالْمَوْؤُدَةُ سُئِلَتْ ○

٩ بِاَيِّ ذَنْبٍ قُتِلَتْ ○

**In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful**

*1. "When the sun is folded up;"*

*2. "And when the stars darken;"*

*3. "And when the mountains shall be set in motion;"*

*4. "And when the pregnant camels shall be neglected,"*

*5. "And when the wild beasts shall be herded together,"*

*6. "And when the seas boil over,"*

*7. "And when the souls are reunited (like with like),"*

*8. "And when the girl-child buried alive is asked,"*

*9. "For what sin she was slain."*

### Commentary:

***The Day When All the Universe Will be Dissolved.***

As it was mentioned earlier, the Sura opens with a series of highly mystical metaphors, with some short, but shocking hints, suggesting the break-up of the world, as we know it, and then, after the end of this world, the ***Resurrection*** comes forth. On the whole, eight signs out of all the Great Events are mentioned here. First, it says:

***"When the sun is folded up."***

The term / kuwwirat / is based on the word / takwīr / which, according to dictionaries and commentaries, originally means '***the act of folding up' and 'rolling or wrapping up something (like wrapping on a turban)***', and it is sometimes used with the sense of '***casting***' and '***darkening***', both of which seem to refer to the original meaning.

In any case, it means, here, the folding up the light of the sun, and the darkening and shrinking of its body.

We now know that the sun is a globe, extremely hot and blazing, surrounded by intense burning gases whose flames shoot out hundreds of kilometers, so that if the Earth were put in one of the flames it would change to ash and gas at once.

But, at the end of this world and at the threshold of the ***Hereafter*** this heat will end and the flames will be folded up, its light will be extinguished, and the sun itself will shrink. This is the meaning of the term /takwīr/.

It is also a known fact, in modern science today, that the star; the sun, will darken gradually.

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***"And when the stars darken".***

The term /inkadarat/ is based on /inkidār/ which means '***to fall, or to scatter***', and, it is derived from the root / kudūrat / , meaning '***gloom and darkness***'. Both of these two meanings can be combined for the commentary of the current verse, because at the threshold of the ***Hereafter,*** the stars will both lose their light, scatter and fall, and also the regularity of the Universe will be disturbed, as **Sura Infitār, No. 82, verse 2** says: "***When the planets are scattered***". In addition, **Sura Mursalāt, No. 77, verse 8** says: "***Then when the stars are extinguished***".

***"And when the mountains shall be set in motion".***

And, as it was mentioned earlier, it is understood from various verses of the Qur'an that close to the time of the occurrence of the ***Resurrection*** the mountains pass through different stages: at first they move, and, in the end change into scattered dust. (More explanation is given in the commentary of **Sura Nabaa, No. 78, verse 20**).

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***"And when the pregnant camels shall be neglected"***

The word / 'išār / is the plural form of / ' išrā '/ and basically means '***she-camel ten months with young***', which is just about to be delivered of her young. That is, in the near future it will be delivered of another camel and, therefore, will possess much milk.

At the time of the revelation of these verses such a camel was considered the most valuable property to the Arabs.

The term / 'uttilat / is based on / ta 'tīl / which means '***to leave without care***'.

It means that the intensity of the horror and fear, on that Day, is so much so that everyone leaves his most precious things unattended.

The late Tabarsī cites in Majma'-al-Bayān that some have said it means '***clouds***' and the term / 'uttilat / means that '***they are want of rain***' , that is, on that Day the clouds appear in the sky, but do not rain. (The '***clouds***' might be the ones which result from different gases or atomic clouds, or a mass of scattered dust produced from cleaving mountains at the threshold of the ***Hereafter***, which contain no rain.

Some have also commented that / 'išār / means '***the houses or farming lands***' that at the threshold of the ***Hereafter*** will be left in suspension.

However, the first commentary is the most popular.

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***"When the wild beasts shall be mustered".***

There are some animals which normally live far from each other and fearing each other, flee, but the terror and the alarm of the events, prior to the ***Hereafter***, is so great that these animals will gather together and forget every fear. It seems as if they feel safer gathered together.

Consequently, a lot of commentators believe that this verse refers to the Resurrection of the wild animals and their presence in the ***Court*** of the ***Hereafter***. They will be judged on their limits and according to their knowledge which relates to their own responsibilities, and will be recompensed if they transgressed. They have considered this verse similar to **Sura An'ām, No.6, verse 38** which says: "***There is not an animal (that lives) on the earth, nor a being that flies on its wings; but (forms part of) communities like you. Nothing have We omitted from the Book, and they (all) shall be gathered to their Lord in the end***" .

The first commentary is more fitting, here.

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***"And when the seas boil over".***

The term / sujjirat / is based on / tasjīr / which originally means '***to light fire and to inflame the fire'***.

In the old days this meaning seemed odd to the commentators, but today it does not, because now we know that water is formed by Oxygen and Hydrogen; both of which are flammable. It is not improbable that at the threshold of the ***Hereafter*** the water of the seas and oceans will be under such conditions that these two elements separate and turn totally into fire.

Some commentaters have rendered the term in the sense of '***to fill***', as a furnace full of fire is called /masajjar/. The earthquakes and the cleaving of the mountains asunder, nearly at the time of ***Resurrection***, may cause the seas to fill and overflow, or meteorites to fall into them and their water flows over land, and then, everything would sink.

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***"And when the souls are reunited (like with like)".***

The good-doers with the good-doers, the evildoers with the evildoers, the companions of the Right Hand with the companions of the Right Hand, and the companions of the Left Hand with the companions of the Left Hnad, all will be like with like, in contrast to the world, today, where all of them are mixed. It sometimes happens that in the neighbourhood of a believer there is an unbeliever, or the spouse of

a good-doer is a wrong doer. But on the ***Day of Judgement***, which is also a '***Sorting Day***' and '***a day of separation***' , these groups are quite apart from each other.

In commenting on this verse, some other probabilities are also suggested including the following:
1) the souls return to their bodies; 2) the souls in Heaven will unite with Heavenly maidens and the souls in Hell will unite with devils; 3) everyone will, again, be with his intimate companions after death has made them separate; or 4) everyone will unite with one's deeds.

However, the first commentary seems to be the most appropriate among all of them. This is what **Sura Wāqi'ah, No. 56, verses 7-10** verify:

***"And you shall be sorted out into three classes:"***
***"Then (there will be) the Companions of the Right Hand; What will be the Companions of the Right Hand?"***
***"And the Companions of the Left Hand, What will be the Companions of the Left Hand?"***
***"And those Foremost (in Faith) will be foremost (in the Hereafter)".***
***"These will be those Nearest to Allah".***

In fact, this verse, after mentioning six great incidents, which are the preliminary events to the ***Resurrection,*** refers to the opening sign of that Great Day, viz: the Day when everyone will be with his companions.

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Then attention is paid to another event of the ***Resurrection***, and says: ***"And when the girl-child buried alive is asked"*** ,

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***"For what sin she was slain".***

The term / mau'ūdat / is derived from / wa'd / which means ' ***a girl who is buried alive***'. Some commentators have said that this word means '***heaviness***' since when girls were buried alive the soil that was poured over them was heavy.

Some narrations denote to a broader meaning for the verse, so vast that it has been commented on as '***cutting the ties of kinship***', or

*'cutting the friendship of the Prophet's household (p.b.u.th.), (Ahl-ul-Bait)'.*

In a tradition it is stated that once Imam Bāqir was asked about the commentary of this verse, and he said that it meant this: "*The persons whom are killed for their friendship to us*".

Another tradition says that the witness to this statement is the verse: "*...Say: No reward do I ask of you for this except the love of these near of kin...*" , (**Sura Shurā, No. 42, verse 23**).

Of course, the apparent meaning of the verse refers to the first commentary, but the verse can, itself, carry a vast meaning.

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***Explanation:***

***The Practice of Female Infanticide:***

One of the most dreadful and most savage actions of the pagan Arabs was female infanticide, which is made reference to, repeatedly, in the Qur'an.

Some commentators believe that this custom was committed only by one tribe of Arabs named 'Kīndih' , (or some other tribe), but, surely it was not a rare phenomenon, otherwise, the Qur'an would not emphatically refer to it on frequent occasions. In any case, it is so terrible and cruel that even its rare occurence is notable.

Commentators have said that the pagan Arabs, when their wives were going to give birth, used to dig a hole and sit above it waiting for the child to be born and then bury her if it was female, and keep him if it was male. The cause of this crime might be due to various reasons, such as the following:

1. The lack of value for women, in Mankind, by the pagan Arabs.

2. The problem of poverty among those people, especially, because females could not be as economically productive and beneficial as males, or were not able to take part in robberies like males were.

3. Also, that in the numerous quarrels between the tribes, of that time, women would be captured by the enemies which brought disgrace on their men. All of these excuses were seen as justified for committing this crime.

These factors contributed to the terrible custom of female infanticide and were committed under the guise of social plausibility in secret collusion. But, unfortunately this cruelty is also seen in modern societies in the form of '***the freedom of abortion***' by which foetuses are legally cast-off in many '***civilized***' countries. The pagan Arabs used to commit infanticide after delivery, but these civilized people, of our time, kill them in their mother's wombs and under the guise of miscarriage.

It is noteworthy that the Qur'an condemns this action and counts it so disgraceful and hateful that it considers the crime of prime accountability prior to the Records in the ***Hereafter*** or pleading for justice about other matters. In addition to the value of woman, it shows

the Islamic view on the importance of the matter, especially regarding the innocent persons.

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Another point, which is also noteworthy, here, is that the Qur'an does not say that the murderers will be asked of what crime they committed, but it says that ***the innocent female-children*** will be asked about what sin it was for which they were slain so cruelly and indefensibly. It seems that the murderers are not worth questioning. Besides that, only the testimony of the murdered ones is enough.

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# Sura Takwir
## (The Folding Up)

*No. 81 (verses 10-14)*

١٠ وَإِذَا الصُّحُفُ نُشِرَتْ ○
١١ وَإِذَا السَّمَاءُ كُشِطَتْ ○
١٢ وَإِذَا الْجَحِيمُ سُعِّرَتْ ○
١٣ وَإِذَا الْجَنَّةُ أُزْلِفَتْ ○
١٤ عَلِمَتْ نَفْسٌ مَا أَحْضَرَتْ ○

*10. "And when the scrolls (of the deeds of mankind) are spread,"*
*11. "And when the heaven shall be unveiled, "*
*12. "And when Hell is set ablaze,"*
*13. "And when the Garden is brought nigh (for the righteous),"*
*14. "Every soul shall (then) know what it has produced (of its deeds)".*

**Commentary:**

The first stage; the events as a preliminary to the ***Resurrection***, viz: the destruction of the world, was described in the former verses. Now, in the following verses, the second stage of the ***Resurrection*** is pointed out, that is, the appearance of the Next World with its record and reckoning.

*"And when the scrolls (of the deeds of mankind) are spread".*

The term /suḥuf/ is the plural form of the term /saḥīfah/ meaning *'a thing spread open like a face, or pages of a book; a book on which something is written'.*

In the *Hereafter,* the records are spread in front of their owners to view, read and count the deeds themselves, **Sura Isrā', No. 17, verse 14** says: "*Read thine (own) record: sufficient is thy soul this day to make out an account against thee.*"

It is also open before the eyes of others; that which is a praise for the good-doers and a pain and punishment for the astray evildoers.

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"*And when the heaven shall be unveiled.*"

The term /kušiṭat/ is based on /kašṭ/ which as *Rāqib* cites in his book *Mufradāt* , originally means '*to remove, take off -- the covering or skin of an animal*', and as *Ibn-Manthūr* cites in *Lisān-ul-Arab* it means '*to remove a curtain from something*' , then the sense, from verse 11, the '*clouds separate and scatter*' is derived from this word.

The term, in this verse, means that the curtains over the subjects hidden; such as angels, Heaven and Hell, which do exist, but are secret to people in this world, will be removed and Man can see the Reality of the existing Universe, and as the next verses denote, the blazing *Hell* and eternal *Heaven* are brought near.

Verily, the *Day of Judgement* is when the reality of everything will be made manifest and the heavens will be unveiled.

According to the above commentary, this verse points to the incidents of the second stage of the *Resurrection* in which the process of Mankind's rebirth will come forth and their new life will begin. The verses before and after it, also, confirm the same idea. Many commentators have meant it with the sense of '*folding up the heavens*' which refers to the events of the first stage of the *Resurrection,* that is, the destruction of this world. This idea seems improbable, though, because it corresponds neither with the orginal meaning of the term /kušitat/ nor with the arrangement of the verses before and after it.

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For this reason, in the next verse, it says:

"*And when Hell is set ablaze*".

As **Sura Taubah, No.9, verse 49** says: "*...And indeed Hell surrounds the Unbelievers (on all sides)*". Hell exits now, today, but, in this world, the curtains cover it and do not let us see it, as well as *Heaven*

which, according to many verses of the Qur'an, is prepared for the Righteous, at this very moment.[1]

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Also, for the same reason, the next verse says:

***"And when the Garden is brought nigh (for the righteous)".***

This very idea is mentioned in **Sura Shu'arā', No.26, verse 90** with a difference that it contains the word '***Righteous***' but, this verse does not.

The term / uzlifat / is based on / zalf / and / zulfā / which means '***nearness, proximity, a near approach***'. This nearness may be from the view point of '***place***' or '***time***' or from the view point of '***the means of preparation***', or all of them, viz: ***Heaven*** is near to the believers both from the point of view of place and time of arrival and it is also easy for them to reach it .

It is worthy to note that it does not say that the Righteous approach Heaven, but it says '***Heaven is brought near for the Righteous***' and this is the most honourable situation possible in this case.

As was mentioned earlier ***Heaven*** and ***Hell*** are present just now, but, on that ***Day***, ***Heaven*** is brought nearer and ***Hell*** is set more ablaze.

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Then, finally, in the last verse of the current section which is, indeed, complementary to the previous verses and is a substantive clause for the conditional clauses occurred in the former twelve verses, it says:

***"Every soul shall (then) know what it has produced (of its deeds)".***

This statement clearly shows that all the deeds of Man are present there, and Man's knowledge about them is a knowledge consisting of observation and self conviction.

This fact is mentioned in some other verses of the Qur'an, too, such as **Sura Kahf, No. 18, verse 49**: "***...They will find all that they did, placed before them...***" ; and **Sura Zilzāl, No. 99, verses 7-8** that say: "***So whoever has done an atom's weight of good shall behold it***" , "***And whoever who has done an atom's weight of evil shall behold it***".

1 Sura Ali-'Imrān, verse 133 - Sura Hadīd, verse 21.

This verse also makes reference to the personification of deeds. Our deeds apparently have an end and vanish in this world, but this will never be so. They will be personified (incarnated) in appropriate forms, in the next world, and present in the ***Hereafter.***

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***Explanation:***

***The Order of the Verses.***

In the current and prior verses twelve events, in relation to the ***Resurrection,*** are mentioned. The first six events relate to the first stage viz: the desolution of this world; and the second six events relate to the second stage, that is, the rebirth and new life after death.

In the first group of verses, the word is about the darkening of the sun and the stars, the movement and agitation of the mountains, the exploding of the seas, the negligence about wealth, and the fear in wild animals.

In the second group of verses, the statement is about: the different groups of Man coming into the ***Hereafter,*** the questioning of the girl-child buried alive, the spreading of the scrolls containing the deeds of Mankind, the removing of the curtains from the heavens, Hell being ablaze, Heaven being brought near, and finally, Man's full knowledge of his own deeds.

In spite of their brevity, these verses are so meaningful and awakening that they shake everyone and bring them into a thoughtful state such that they can visualize the end of this world and the circumstances of the ***Resurrection,*** in their minds, as if they see them with their very eyes. How nice and expressive the verses of the Qur'an are, and how impressive and meaningful its refined subtleties and pertinent details!

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***Will the Solar System and the Stars Darken?***

First of all, we should know that the Sun is a star and a medium sized one among all stars, but by itself and in comparison with the Earth it is extraordinarily large. Its volume is more than 1,300,000 times that of the Earth, but since its mean distance from the Earth is nearly

93,000,000 miles (about 150,000,000 kilometers) we see it as it is now.

To understand the immenseness and greatness of the Sun it is enough to imagine that if the Earth and its moon, with the same distance that they have between them now, were transferred into the Sun; the moon could easily rotate around the Earth, inside the Sun, without protruding out from its inner surface.

The outside heat of the Sun is estimated to be about 6,000° C, and the heat of the inside is estimated to be several million degrees. (For additional data about the Sun, refer to page 87, **Sura Nabaa, No. 78, verse 13**).

If we want to express the weight of the Sun in metric ton, we should write the figure 2 with twenty seven zeros behind it.

The height of the flames from the Sun's surface shoot up to about 160,000 kilometers, so that our Earth can easily disappear in them because, the Earth's diameter is not more than 12,000 kilometers.

The heat and the brightness of the Sun, inspite of George Gamof's statement, do not originate from burning coal forming the Sun's body, but are from the energy produced by atomic decomposition and we know that this energy is extremely intense. Therefore, the atoms of the Sun are always changing into energy through decomposition and reduction. According to the calculations of scientists, every minute, the Sun loses 4,000,000 tons of weight, but its body is so huge that it does not show an apparent change even after thousands of years.

It is worth mentioning, here, that the very loss of weight is effective in the destruction of the Sun over a length of time, and by becoming thinner and thinner at last, this great world-illuminating-lamp will gradually darken. This fate is also true for the other stars.

Therefore, what is said in the aforementioned verses about the darkening of the Sun and the destruction of the stars is a fact that is in agreement with modern science. The Qur'an has stated these facts when, not only in the Arabian Peninsula, but in all scientific meetings held by scientists of the world, at that time, no one knew anything about these statistics.

# Sura Takwir
## (The Folding Up)

*No. 81 (verses 15-25)*

١٥ فَلَآ أُقْسِمُ بِالْخُنَّسِ ○
١٦ الْجَوَارِ الْكُنَّسِ ○
١٧ وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا عَسْعَسَ ○
١٨ وَالصُّبْحِ إِذَا تَنَفَّسَ ○
١٩ إِنَّهُ لَقَوْلُ رَسُولٍ كَرِيمٍ ○
٢٠ ذِي قُوَّةٍ عِنْدَ ذِي الْعَرْشِ مَكِينٍ ○
٢١ مُطَاعٍ ثَمَّ أَمِينٍ ○
٢٢ وَمَا صَاحِبُكُمْ بِمَجْنُونٍ ○
٢٣ وَلَقَدْ رَآهُ بِالْأُفُقِ الْمُبِينِ ○
٢٤ وَمَا هُوَ عَلَى الْغَيْبِ بِضَنِينٍ ○
٢٥ وَمَا هُوَ بِقَوْلِ شَيْطَانٍ رَجِيمٍ ○

*15. "No, I swear by the orbiting planets,"*
*16. "That run their course, (and) set,"*
*17. "And (by) the night when it ends,"*
*18. "And (by) the morning when it breathes."*
*19. "Surely it is the word of a gracious Messenger,"*
*20. "Endowed with power in the presence of the Lord of the Universe;"*
*21. "One (to be) obeyed, moreover faithful in trust."*
*22. "And (O people) your companion (Our Messenger) is not mad."*
*23. "Indeed he saw him (angel Gabriel) on the clear horizon."*
*24. "And he does not withhold concerning the unseen,"*
*25. "Nor is it the word of the accursed Satan."*

### *Commentary:*

***Gabriel, the Bringer of Allah's Message Descends to him.***

In the previous verses the ***Resurrection*** and preliminary events, with some other incidents of that Great Day, were discussed. The following verses speak about the importance of the Qur'an, showing how the Qur'anic Revelation is true, was revealed through the angel Gabriel, and was not merely ravings or rhapsodies from one possessed. In fact, they confirm what was said about the ***Resurrection***, in the former verses, and emphasize on the matter while giving some additional information.

***"No, I swear by the orbiting planets",***

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***"That run their course, (and) set".***

The term /xunnas/ is the plural form of / xānis / based on /xans/ which originally means: '***shrink, hide away***' , and Satan is called /xannās/ because he hides himself at the name of *Allah*, as one tradition we find that it says: "***Satan tempts the servants of Allah and when His name is mentioned he slinks out of sight***".

The term / jawār / is the plural form of / jāriyah /, which has the meaning: '***running***'.

The term /kunnas/ is the plural form of / kānas/ based on / kans/ which means '***to lie in hiding***', and the term /kinās/ from the same root word is called both '***the nest of birds***' and '***the hiding place of deer and wild beasts***'.

Different opinions have been introduced for the meaning of these oaths. Many commentators believe that they refer to the five planets: Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Venus, and Mercury, which are visible with the naked eye.

If we look to the sky over several nights in succession, we see that all of the stars gradually appear, but, they sit all together without having apparent change in the distance between them. It looks like a piece of black cloth on which a great number of pearls have been sewn having defined spaces, and the cloth is pulled up from one side and taken down from another side depicting day and night. Only five planets are exceptions to this regulation. They move through the stars as if there

were five unsewn pearls on the cloth that move freely among the others.

On the one hand, the above mentioned five planets are the very ones which are among the family members of the solar system. We see their movements, because they are close to us in comparison with the other stars in the sky; which also have similar movements, but we can not see this because of their very far distances.

On the other hand, these planets seem to have no retrograde and forward motion; apparently looking like they move forward for a length of time, then, they return a little and, again, continue moving forward. The causes for this status are discussed in astronomy.

The above verses may point to the same matter; that these planets move forward: / aljawār/ , and along their way, they, apparently, and at last, in the morning at dawn, hide away: /kunnas/ like the deer which move in the deserts to find food at night, but conceal themselves in their hiding places; /kunās/, in the day time, from beast of prey.

It is probable that the meaning of /kunnas/ is that, when rotating round the sun, the planets hide or disappear completely at a point behind the sun, or are otherwise invisible. Astronomers call this case /ihtirāq/ in the Arabic language. This is a delicate point which can be understood with careful attention.

Some also believe that /konnas/ refers to the settlement of these planets in the Zodic which resemble the deer concealing themselves in their brush-homes. It is obvious, of course, that the planets of the solar system are not limited to these five planets, but there are three more planets among them which are visible only by telescope and have been named ***Neptune, Uranus*** and ***Pluto***. All of them, together with the Earth, form the nine planets of our solar system. (Of course, some of the nine planets have a moon or moons which are different from the planets themselves).

By the way, the term /jawārī/, the plural form of /jāriyah/ (one of the meanings is '***ships in motion***') , is a delicate analogy which compares the movement of these planets, in the ocean of sky, with the movement of ships on the surface of the oceans.

It seems that the Qur'an, by stating these meaningful oaths with a kind of ambiguity, tends to stir minds and make them contemplate and pay attention to the exceptional and various status of these planets from

the millions of stars around them, in order to better understand the greatness of the ***Creator*** of this lofty establishment.

Others have suggested some commentaries on these verses which we will not mention here.

A narration, on the commentary of these verses, denotes that Amir-al-Mo'mineen ***(p.b.u.h.)*** said: ***"They are five stars: Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Venus and Mercury."***

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***"And (by) the night when it ends."***

The term / 'as'as/ is based on / 'as'asah/ which originally means '***pale darkness***' and since darkness is lesser at the beginning and at the end of the night this word is used for the coming and going of night, and that is why, in Arabic, '***he who goes round by night to keep watch***' , is called / 'asas/.

Although, as was mentioned before, the term has two quite opposite meanings, here, and by the evidence of the next verse, it means the end of night. In fact, it is similar to the oath mentioned in **Sura Muddathir, No.74, verse 33**: ***"And by the Night as it retreateth."***

Night is one of the great gifts from *Allah*, and it is both the cause of Man's spiritual and bodily tranquility, as well as an adjustment for the Sun's heat and, consequently, the continuation of vitality in living creatures. The emphasis put on '***the end of night***' may be for the reason that night moves toward light and brightness and it is the best time for praying to and the worshipping of *Allah*. Dawn, in this world, is the beginning of movement and struggle for living creatures.

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***"And (by) the morning when it breathes."***

What an interesting analogy! Morning resembles a living creature whose first breath is dawn and blows vitality into all creatures, as if it had been captured in the grip of night and now with the first glow of day, becomes free and breathes.

This sense is similar to what is mentioned in **Sura Muddathir, No. 74, verse 34** which occurs after the oath to the night, which says: ***"And by the Dawn as it shines forth."*** It is as though the gloom of night like a veil, has fallen on the face of morning which is removed now, at

dawn, and the morning's glittering face, which is a sign of life, is shown to all in this world.

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In the next verse, what all these oaths are for is mentioned:

***"Surely it is the word of a gracious Messenger."***

This verse is an answer to those who accuse the Prophet ***(p.b.u.h.)*** by saying that the Qur'an is from him; not from *Allah*.

In this verse and the following verse there are five characteristics mentioned for Gabriel, the courier of *Allah*, which are necessary, indeed, for any qualified messenger.

The first attribute of Gabriel is that he is '***gracious***' which shows his worthiness. Verily, he is a worthy creature with *Allah*, the Great.

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Then, another characteristic of Gabriel is mentioned; it says:

***"Endowed with power in the presence of the Lord of the Universe."***

The term / ðil-'arš / '***the Lord of the Universe***' refers to *Allah*. He is the Lord of all, but since the Universe, with whatever definition it has, is in a higher position than that of other things, so, He is characterized by the Universe.

The term / ði-quwwah / '***endowed with power***' is used to characterize Gabriel for the reason that taking such a great Message and carefully communicating it needs a great power. And, as a matter of fact, any messenger should have an authority fitting with his mission or the message. He must be especially free from any forgetfulness of the message that he is responsible for.

The term /makīn/ means '***one whose rank is firmly established***' , and, basically, a messenger should be a great and outstanding person who can fulfill his mission and should be quite close and beloved. And, surely, the term / 'ind/ '***in the presence of***' does not have the meaning of a special presence, because *Allah* does not exist in any one location; but it is the '***rank presence***' and '***spiritual nigh***'.

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*"One (to be) obeyed, moreover faithful in trust."*

The term / θumma / '*moreover*' points to the fact that the bringer of *Allah's* Message, the Archangel Gabriel, has an angelic authority among angels and is obeyed there, and, beyond these, he is faithful to his trust in conveying the Message.

It is understood from some narrations that when Gabriel was conveying the revelation he was accompanied by a large number of angels who obeyed him.

There is a tradition which says that when these verses were descended, the holy Prophet *(p.b.u.h.)* told Gabriel:

*"How well your Lord praised you when he said: 'Endowed with power in the presence of the Lord of the Universe,' 'One (to be) obeyed, more over faithful in trust'. Then, what is your power? And what is your faithfulness in trust?"*

Gabriel answered him that his power was such that he was told to destroy the four cities of Lot's people, each of which had four hundred thousand fighters; excluding their children. He destroyed those cities and took them to Heaven. so that the angels of Heaven even heard the sound of the peoples' animals, then he returned them to the Earth and turned them upside down.

Gabriel continued, in this way, so that there was no instruction that he did not fully carry out.

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Furthermore, to tell people that the holy Prophet *(p.b.u.h.)* is honourable and trustworthy, it says:

*"And (O people) your companion (Our Messenger) is not mad."*

The term /sāhib/ means '*companion, friend*' , and besides pointing to the humility of the Prophet *(p.b.u.h.)*, toward all people, and that he did not seek any superiority for himself, it appeals to the people to take note of their own '*companion*' , the Prophet, *(p.b.u.h.)* who had been born among them and had lived with them for many years. He was known to be a wise, honourable, truthful, and trustworthy man. How could he be mad? The only thing is that, with his Prophecy , he brought some instructions to teach 'you' but, they are disagreeing with 'your' prejudices, blind imitations and low desires. So, to flee from obeying his

instructions 'you' accuse him of demonical possession.

According to the verses of Qur'an, all Prophets were accused, by their enemies, of being mad: *"Similarly, no apostle came to peoples before them, but they said (of him) in like manner, 'A sorcerer or one possessed',* (**Sura Ẓāriyāt, No. 51, verse 52**).

They thought the wise man was he who would fulfill their vices and follow their lusts, knew well on which side the bread was buttered, and would avoid any revolutionary development. Then, on this level, all the Prophets seemed, to them, to be mad.

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For laying stress on the relation between the holy Prophet *(p.b.u.h.)* and Gabriel, it says: *"Indeed he saw him(angel Gabriel) on the clear horizon"*. The meaning of the terms /ufuq-il-mubīn/ '*clear horizon*' is the same as '*the highest part of the horizon*', where the angels were made manifest and where the Prophet *(p.b.u.h.)* saw Gabriel.

Some believe that **Sura Najm, No. 53, verse 7** which says: *"While he was in the highest part of the horizon;"* is an evidence for this commentary, but this verse, as well as the other verses of that Sura, talks about another fact.

Also, some have said that the Prophet *(p.b.u.h.)* saw Gabriel twice in his genuine appearance: once, at the beginning of his prophetic appointment, and whose greatness made him *(p.b.u.h.)* elated. He appeared to him *(p.b.u.h.)* on the highest horizon .

The second time was on the Nocturnal Journey of the Prophet *(p.b.u.h.)* where he saw Gabriel in the high heavens, in his real appearance, to which the current verse refers.

It is also probable that it refers to the Prophet's observation of *Allah* through a vision of inspiration.

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*"And he does not withhold concerning the unseen".*

Whatever he has, he puts it within the reach of the people. He is not like those who insist on keeping secret an important fact which they have gained and is in their own control and it sometimes happens that they withhold it until they die.

The Prophet *(p.u.b.h.)* is not such a person. He gives what he has

received, as revelation, to all the needy and even to those who stand in opposition to him and value him naught, in hopes that they may be guided to the right path.

The term / ḍanīn / is based on /ḍinnah/ in the sense of '***stinginess for the precious things***', which is a characteristic that Prophets never have, because the source of their knowledge is *Allah*; Who is infinite.

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***"Nor is it the word of the accursed Satan".***

These Qur'anic verses are not like the statements of necromancers and soothsayers who take them from the devils. Those statements are full of lies and mistakes, and based on their own wishes; which come with envy, spite, greed, or other vices, but these verses are full of clear truth, under divine inspiration whose signs are apparent in them. These two are completely different from each other, of course. It has been shown that the Qur'an is not the word of a mortal, but that it is full of divine wisdom; that its teaching is not that of a mad man, but from one sane to the core and in accordance with human needs.

The term / rajīm / is originally based on / rajm / and / rijām / which means '***stoned***' and then, it is used in the sense of throwing stones in order to drive a person or an animal away. And it is used in the sense of any rejection or driving away. The Arabic term / šaytān ir-rajīm / means '***Satan who is driven away with stones from the rank of those close to Allah***'.

***Explanation:***

*The Characteristics of a Qualified Messenger:*

The five characteristics, regarding the hierarchy, mentioned in the above verses for Gabriel, who was sent to the Prophet ***(p.u.b.h.)*** of Islam by *Allah*, are required for every messenger, regarding the hierarchy.

1. Graciousness is the first spiritual characteristic which respectfully makes Gabriel deserving of being a great Messenger.

2. Then his endowed power for the fulfillment of his responsibility comes forth which means that he is aloof from any

weakness and feebleness or lassitude in bringing the Message.

3. His third highest rank, with the sender of the Message, is noteworthy in order to take all of the Message completely, and communicate them fearlessly.

4. If the Message is about an important thing, the messenger may have some assistants to help him on the errand; the ones who follow him obediently.

5. The fifth characteristic is that his messenger is qualified as being '***faithful in trust***' so that the persons who are to receive the message, from him, trust in him and count on his words; the same as the words of the one who has sent them.

When someone is qualified with these five characteristics, he will be the most fitting messenger. The Prophet of Islam ***(p.u.b.h.)*** used to choose his messengers carefully from those who were qualified among them. A clear example of his messengers is that of Amir-al-Mo'mineen Ali ***(p.u.b.h.)*** who was sent, under that difficult situation, by the Prophet ***(p.u.b.h.)*** to the pagans of Mecca to communicate the beginning verses of **Sura Taubah, No.9.**

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# Sura Takwir
## (The Folding Up)

*No. 81 (verses 26-29)*

٢٦ فَأَيْنَ تَذْهَبُونَ ○
٢٧ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ لِلْعَالَمِينَ ○
٢٨ لِمَنْ شَاءَ مِنْكُمْ أَنْ يَسْتَقِيمَ ○
٢٩ وَمَا تَشَاءُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ ○

*26. "Whither then will you go?"*

*27. "Surely it (the Qur'an) is naught but a Reminder to (all) the worlds,"*

*28. "For whoever of you who would go straight."*

*29. "But you cannot will, except as Allah wills, the Lord of the Worlds."*

**Commentary:**

*O Neglectful Ones! Where are You Going?*

In the previous verses it was made clear that the Holy Qur'an is the word of *Allah*. Its contents show that it cannot be from a devilish source, but from *Allah*, the Merciful, from Whom Gabriel the powerful, faithful carrier of *Allah's* revelation, brought it to the sane Prophet *(p.u.b.h)* who communicated and taught it, completely, to people and did not withhold anything of it.

The following verses condemn the rejecters for their disobedience to this great word, the Holy Qur'an. It reproachfully questions:

*"Whither then will you go?"*

Why have you left the straight path and gone astray? Why have you turned your back to this leading bright torch and gone toward darkness? Are you against your own happiness and safety?

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***"Surely it (the Qur'an) is naught but a Reminder to (all) the Worlds."***

It advises and warns all to be aware and not to be neglectful.

Since training and guidance need not only the '***act of the actor***' but, also '***the fitness of the fit***' , then it says:

***"For whoever of you who would go straight."***

It is noteworthy that the former verse says that the Qur'an is a reminder to all the worlds, but this verse says that it is for a special group of people; those who have decided to assume the truth and go on the straight way. The reason for this difference is that the first verse speaks about the generality of this divine gift, while the second one states the conditions for obtaining benefits from it. And all the blessings in the world are the same: they are basically general, but their usage depends on '***will***' and '***decision***'.

**Sura Baqarah, No. 2, verse 2** carries a similar sense: ***"This is the Book, in it is guidance sure, without doubt, to those who fear Allah."***

In any case, this verse is one of the verses which shows that *Allah* has created Man free; possessing free-will. Then, it is Man who should decide which way to follow; the right way or the wrong one.

The term /yastaqīm/ is used with an interesting sense which shows that the main road, the one in front of Man, is the straight way to happiness and salvation and other roads are the false ones leading to aberration. All of Man's talents, along with his hidden and apparent powers and his natural capacities, are equipped so as to help him move forward on the straight way. When going to extremes, devilish temptations, and misleading propaganda do not interfere. Man, with the help of his nature, follows along the straight way, and we know that the straight way is always the nearest path to the goal.

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It is possible, however, for Man to imagine that this free-will is so infinite that he can do whatever he wishes and that he is not in need of *Allah's* help to follow the straight way. The next and the last verse of the Sura points to the authority of *Allah's* Will and says:

***"But you cannot will, except as Allah wills, the Lord of the Worlds"***

In fact, these two verses illustrate the mid-way for Man's limited

will. On the one hand, it says that Man is free and can decide what he wills to do, but, on the other hand, it says: "***You cannot will, except as Allah wills.***" It means that you are created free, but this free-will is from *Allah* and He has willed that you be so.

Man is neither obliged nor completely free in his deeds. Neither '***fatalism***' nor '***infinite freedom***' is correct. Whatever Man possesses out of wisdom, intelligence, bodily ability and mental capacity for making decisions, all in all, are from *Allah*. It is this very fact that requires Man to be in need of Him and, due to his freedom and his free-will, to be responsible for his own duties and actions.

The term /rabbul-'ālamīn/ '***the Lord of the worlds***' shows, well, that *Allah's* Will follows along the path of Man's training and development throughout the world. *Allah* never wills that anyone should go astray or commit sin and lose the nearness to Himself. He, according to His Lordship, helps all those who decide to travel on the path of spiritual development.

It is surprising that fatalists have grasped the second verse while the '***adherents of infinite free-will***' have assumed the first verse. Separating these kinds of verses from each other often causes aberration and lands one in a state of being misled. Verses of the Qur'an should be considered inseparable and the benefits should be taken from all of them.

It is interesting that some of the commentators have said that when the verse: "***For whoever of you would go straight***", was revealed, Abū-Jahl, who was actually one of the adherents of infinite free-will, said that it became a good chance for them and they had all the authorizations at their disposal. Then, following that, the second verse was revealed : "***But you cannot will, except as Allah wills, the Lord of the Worlds.***"

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**Supplication:**

***O Lord! We know that we cannot be on the straight way unless you help us, so we seek your help.***

***O Lord! We have decided to go on the guided way; we ask for your Divine Will, too.***

***O Lord! Your throne of Judgement, in the Hereafter, is very frightening, and our Records contain few good deeds. Please forgive us with Your Own Sublime Graciousness; not with your strict Justice.***

The End

Sura Takwīr
(The Folding Up)

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

# Sura Infitar
# (The Cleaving Asunder)

*No. 82 (19 Verses)*

***Contents of the Sura:***

The theme of this Sura, similar to that of other Suras of the last part of the Qur'an, is about the ***Hereafter*** and points to five different subjects:

1. The preliminary events which happen at the end of this physical world and just a little before that, the new Spiritual World is established.

2. A hint to the blessings of *Allah* that encompass Man's entity, and the breaking of his pride, in order for him to be prepared for the ***Resurrection.***

3. A reference to the angels who are appointed to record the deeds of Man.

4. The end of '***The Righteous***' and '***The wicked***' on the ***Day of Judgment.***

5. A part of the hardship on that ***Great Day.***

A narration from Imam Sādiq *(p.b.u.h.)* says: "***He who recites those two Suras: Infitār and Inshiqāq, and considers them present before his eyes in his obligatory and optional prayers, nothing will separate him from Allah and there will be no hindrance between him and Allah. He will be in the continuous presence of Allah and Allah will be looking over him until all of the accounts he has with others are settled.***"

# Sura Infitar
## (The Cleaving Asunder)

*No. 82 (verses 1-5)*

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

١ اِذَاالسَّمَآءُ انْفَطَرَتْ ○

٢ وَ اِذَا الْكَوَاكِبُ انْتَثَرَتْ ○

٣ وَاِذَا الْبِحَارُ فُجِّرَتْ ○

٤ وَاِذَاالْقُبُورُ بُعْثِرَتْ ○

٥ عَلِمَتْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ وَ اَخَّرَتْ ○

**In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful**

*1. "When The Sky is cleft asunder."*

*2. "And when the planets are scattered."*

*3. "And when the seas burst forth,"*

*4. "And when the graves are over turned (emptied),"*

*5. "Every soul shall know what it has sent forward and (what it has) held back."*

### *Commentary:*

*The Disturbance in Order and Symmetry.*

Again, at the beginning of this Sura, we are informed about a part of the horrible events that occur, throughout the world, immediately before the *Day of Judgment*. It says:

*"When the Sky is cleft asunder".*

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*"And when the planets are scattered."*

The present phenomenal order will not last for ever. Then, constellations will lose their regularity and the order of this world will be disturbed. All stars and planets in the sky, revolving around special points, will leave their routine and, hitting each other, burst violently. All will be destroyed before the new Spiritual World is established.

The term /infatarat/ is based on /infiṭār/ which means '***being cloven asunder***'. It resembles the term used in some verses of the Qur'an, such as, **Sura Inshiqāq, No. 84, verse 1** which says: "***When The Sky is rent asunder***".

And, it also resembles **Sura Muzammil, No. 73, verse 18** which says: "***Whereon the sky will be cleft asunder?....***" .

The term /intaθarat/ is basically derived from /naθr/ which means '***to disperse***' and the term /intiθār/ means '***to scatter***', and, hence, scattered stars cause each one of them to be thrust in different directions, then many commentators have interpreted the term /intaθarat/ as the '***falling of the stars***' which is appropriate with the sense of '***scatter***'.

The term /kawakib/ is the plural form of /kaukab/ which carries many meanings in the Arabic language, including: '***star***', in the general sense, and '***Venus***' in a proper sense: i.e. a white point in the eye, tall plants, blossoms, the shine of steel, a handsome lad, a sword, water, the chief of a group, etc.

However, it seems that the main meaning is '***a bright star***' and other meanings are used metaphorically in relation to that meaning.

What factor or factors cause the stars to be scattered? Is it because of the disturbance of their polarization? Does a mysterious power have an effect on them? Or is it the consequence of the world's gradual contraction, which is now approved of by the scientific community. No one knows the exact answer, but it is, at least, understood from them that when these great phenomena cannot resist and will be totally shattered then the position of Man, a weak creature, is obvious.

This is an admonishment to Man, in relation to the destruction of this phenomenal world, in order for him not to consider it immortal or not to be attached to it and avoid committing numerous sins for its sake.

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After speaking about the sky, the Sura says:

*"And when the seas burst forth".*

Although the seas and oceans (other than the lakes), on the Earth, are now connected to each other, it seems that prior to the *Hereafter* the mountains will turn to rubble, because of earthquakes, and will fill them up, entirely, so that water will cover all the lands, and the seas will join to each other as a single ocean which will overwhelm the whole planet (Earth); as **Sura Takwīr, No.81, verse 6** says: *"When the seas boil over swelling".*

There is another probability, in commenting on these two verses, which interprets the term /fujjirat/ and /sujjirat/ in the sense of *'explosion in the seas which turns the seas into fire'*, because, as was said before, water is formed with a combination of two elements; both of which are combustible. If something cheimcally separates the water of the seas into oxygen and hydrogen, a small spark can ignite it into an overwhelming, blazing inferno.

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Then, speaking about the *Resurrection,* where the dead are thrown out for reckoning, which is the stage for the rebirth of the dead and the world, it says:

*"And when the graves are over turned (emptied),"*

The term /bu'θirat / means *'to turn upside-down'* or *'to be scattered'*. Rāqib cites in his book *'Mufradāt '* that the word may be combined from two parts: /ba'θ/ and /aθīrat / where both meanings are gathered in it, (like /bismillāh/ which is formed from /bismi/ and /allāh/).

In any event, what is said in the above verse is similar to what **Sura Zilzāl, No.99, verse 2** denotes: *"And the Earth throws up her burdens (from within)".*

Or, it resembles **Sura Nāzi'at, No.79, verses 13-14** which say: *"But it shall be only a single blast", "When behold, they shall be in the awakened state".*

All these statements show that the rebirth, and the dead coming out from their graves, will occur suddenly and rapidly.

And, after pointing to some events that happen before and after the ***Resurrection***; as a conclusion it says:

***"Every soul shall know what it has sent forward and (what it has) held back."***

Verily, on that ***Day,*** everything will be obvious to all and the curtains of arrogance and pride will be removed, then, the full ***Reality*** will be manifested. Man will see his deeds altogether, irrespective of good or evil, and understands what sort of deeds he had sent forth and what kind of deeds, together with their effects, remained in the world, whose result reached him later after his death; such as, acts of charity done, any remaining voluntary alms and/or pious foundations and endowments, or the books and works he had left behind; whether with good intention or evil ones, of which other persons used after him, and, also, the good or bad habits that remain among societies for generations.

These are some of Man's deeds that their result reaches him after his death and they are the examples of the term /axxarat/ ***'what it has held back'***, which is mentioned in the verse.

It is true that in this world everyone is, more or less, familiar with what he has done, but forgetfulness, selfishness, and self-love often prevent Man from keeping all of his actions in mind and understanding the depth of their final result. However, on the ***Day*** when everything changes and there will be a revolution in all things in the world, including Man's spirit; he will have a complete knowledge and a precise comprehension of what he has done in his life. Or, more than that, he will see all of them in front of himself as **Sura Āl-i-'Imrān, No.3, verse 30** says: ***"On the Day when every soul will be confronted with all the good it has done, and all the evil it has done ...."***,

Some of the commentators have rendered the verse with some other interpretations, one of which is that it means the deeds that Man has committed at the beginning of his life and the deeds that he has postponed to do at the end of his life. But, the first commentary is more appropriate in every respect.

By the way, the term /nafs/ ***'soul'***, here, means every individual human spirit, and it includes all Mankind, in general.

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***Explanations:***

Besides what is said in the above verses about the remaining result of Man's deeds, there are some narrations which say that there may be some actions, fulfilled by Man, whose effect; good or bad, lasts for many years or even forever, and he receives its fruit.

A narration from Imam Sādiq *(p.b.u.h.)* says: "***There will be no reward for a man after his death except in three ways: the pious foundations that he has established in his life and that will continue after his death, a tradition of guidance for the benefit of people according to which they behave after his death, and a believing good child who asks forgiveness from Allah for him***".[1]

The things that are beneficial for the believers after their death are six according to another narration: a pious child, the Qur'an that he studies, a well he has dug (for its water), a tree he has planted, providing water, and, finally, a good tradition that persists after him and is beloved by all.[2]

Some narrations focus on the science that a person leaves behind amongst people.[3]

There are numerous narrations that warn people to be especially careful about their behaviour, because their behaviour may cause their societies to have some good or bad traditions later.

The late Tabarsi cites a tradition corresponding with the above mentioned verses that states: once a person, who was attending with the Prophet *(p.b.u.h)*, rose and asked people to help him with some financial matter. No one responded to him. At this moment, one of the Prophet's *(p.b.u.h.)* companions gave the beggar something. Then others followed suit and everyone gave him something to help him and the Prophet *(p.b.u.h.)* said: "***He who leaves a good tradition behind himself; one that others follow, will have his own reward and, in addition to this he will have a reward similar to his followers' rewards; without decreasing anything from that which they gained. And he who leaves an evil tradition behind himself and others follow it, will have his own sin plus a sin***

1 Bihār-ul-Anwār, vol. 71, p. 257.

2 Ibid.

3 Maniyyat-ul-Murīd, p. 11.

***similar to his followers' sins, both, without decreasing from any of them.***" At that moment Khathifah, one of the Prophet's companions ***(p.b.u.h.),*** recited the verse: "***Every soul shall know what it has sent forward and (what it has) held back.***" [1]

Amir-al-Mo'mineen Ali ***(p.b.u.h.)*** says: "***What will your position be, then, when your affairs reach their end and graves are turned upside down (to throw out the dead)? There, every soul shall realize what it has sent before, and they shall be brought back to Allah, their true Lord, and what they did fabricate (the false deities) will vanish from them.***" [2]

These verses and narrations illustrate Man's responsibility for his deeds, from the Islamic point of view, so that they may result in some good rewards or painful punishments for him even after the passing of thousands of years.

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1 Majma'-al-Bayān, vol. 10, p. 449.

2 Nahj-ul-Balāqa, Sermon No. 226 (Arabic Version).

# Sura Infitar
## (The Cleaving Asunder)

*No. 82 (verses 6-12)*

٦ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الْاِنْسَانُ مَا غَرَّكَ بِرَبِّكَ الْكَرِيْمِ ○
٧ اَلَّذِىْ خَلَقَكَ فَسَوّٰىكَ فَعَدَلَكَ ○
٨ فِىْٓ اَىِّ صُوْرَةٍ مَّا شَآءَ رَكَّبَكَ ○
٩ كَلَّا بَلْ تُكَذِّبُوْنَ بِالدِّيْنِ ○
١٠ وَاِنَّ عَلَيْكُمْ لَحٰفِظِيْنَ ○
١١ كِرَامًا كَاتِبِيْنَ ○
١٢ يَعْلَمُوْنَ مَا تَفْعَلُوْنَ ○

*6. "O Man! What has seduced you (away) from your Lord, the Gracious?"*

*7. "Who created you and fashioned you, and proportioned you in perfection?"*

*8. "In whatever form He pleased, He constituted you."*

*9. "Nay! but you disbelieve in the (day of) reckoning."*

*10. "And surely there are Watchers over you,"*

*11. "Honourable scribes:"*

*12. "They know (and understand) whatever you do."*

***Commentary:***

***O Man! What Has Seduced You?***

Concerning the previous verses about the ***Resurrection,*** the following verses; to awaken Man and to direct his attention to the responsibility of that which *Allah* expects of him, the Qur'an kindly questions in an intensive scornful tone and says:

***"O Man! What has seduced you from your Lord, the Gracious?"***

Here, ***'Man'*** is mentioned for the sake of his humanity, which is a privilege of his over all other creatures in the world. Then he is in the presence of *Allah,* Who is both Lord and Gracious. Because of His Lordship He supports Man and undertakes his training and improvement; and because of His Graciousness, He bestows innumerable material and spiritual blessings on him without expecting repayment or reward. He even overlooks his mistakes and forgives him.

Is it appropriate for this noble creature to be bold and disgraceful to such a great Lord?

Or, is it right for Man to be neglectful of Him and not to obey His instructions that guarantee his own happiness?

That is why a narration from the Prophet ***(p.b.u.h.)*** for this commentary of the verses says: ***"His ignorance has caused him to be proud and neglectful."***

This statement makes it clear that the main purpose is that by relying on His Lordship and Graciousness, the pride and negligence of Man is removed.

The term /qarraka/ is based on the term / qurūr / which originally means '***negligence in wakefulness***' ; or, in other words, negligence where Man should not be neglectful. Since negligence sometimes becomes the source of '***boldness***' or the feeling of '***self-importance***' , the term / qurūr / has been interpreted in these senses. Satan is called / qarūr / because he seduces Man with temptations and causes him to be neglectful and bold.

In commenting on the term / karīm /, various interpretations have been cited:

Some have said that / karīm / is used for '***gracious one***'; that all his actions are beneficent and he seeks for neither gaining benefit nor parrying loss.

Some others have said that / karīm / means '*one who donates what is for him to donate and what is not* '.

Still others have said that / karīm / is '*one who pays a lot for a little*'.

However, in fact, all of these commentaries are gathered together in the essence of the term when it refers to the utmost graciousness of one, such as *Allah*; the most Gracious, Who not only forgives the sinners, but also changes their sins into good deeds (for those who deserve forgiveness).

There are some wonderful statements from Amir-al-Mo'mineen Ali *(p.b.u.h.)* in commenting on the verse. In the following one, he says: *"The addressee (in this verse) is devoid of argument and his excuse is most deceptive. He is holding himself in ignorance."*

*"O Man! What has emboldened you to (commit) sins; what has deceived you about your God and what has made you satisfied with the destruction of yourself? Is there no cure for your ailment or no awakening from your sleep? Do you not have pity on yourself as you have on others? Generally, when you see anyone exposed to the heat of the sun you cover him with shade, or if you see any one afflicted with grief that pains his body you weep from pity for him. What, then, has made you patient over your own disease? What has made you firm in your own affliction, and what has consoled you from weeping for yourself although your life is the most precious of all lives to you? And why does not the fear of an ailment, that may befall you in the night, keep you wakeful although you travel on the road to Allah's wrath due to your sins? "*

*"You should cure the disease of languor in your heart by determination, and the sleep of neglectfulness in your eyes by wakefulness. Be obedient to Allah, and love Him in remembrance, and picture yourself, running away when He is approaching you. He is calling you to His forgiveness and concealing your faults with His kindness, all the while you are fleeing away from Him toward others."*

*"Certainly, Allah is Great; the Powerful, Who is so generous, but how humble and weak are you and yet so bold to commit disobedience to Him although you live in His protection and undergo changes of life in the expanse of His kindness... "* .[1]

1 Nahj-ul-Balāqa, Sermon No. 223 (Arabic Version), No. 227 (English Version).

Then to awaken the neglectful Man, in four steps it points to a part of *Allah's* favour and says:

***"Who created you and fashioned you, and proportioned you in perfection".***

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***"In whatever form He pleased, He constituted you".***

Thus, the Qur'an mentions four great stages in the Creation of Man, viz: the creation itself, the fashioning of him, his proportion afterward, and, finally, the constitution of Man.

The first stage in the creation of Man is from the lowly life-germ in the darkness of the mother's womb.

The second stage is his fashioning in a just form and with appropriate limbs in an astonishing regular formation. Eyes, ears, heart, blood vessels, and other organs of the body are created so surprisingly that if Man thinks about their structures and regularities and understands *Allah's* Beneficence to him, each of them will be illustrated as a world of knowledge and power that *Allah* granted Man, because of His Favour and Graciousness.

These are the Divine gifts that natural scientists have been thinking over, working on, and writing about for thousands of years, but they are still at the threshold.

The third stage is proportioning Man and adjusting his faculties as well as his organs, and then, their internal coordinations and relations with each other.

The parts of Man's body are created mainly symmetrically: hands, feet, eyes, ears, some bones, vessels and muscles are in pairs on both sides of the body.

Besides, different organs and limbs cooperate with each other to accomplish their functions, for instance, the respiratory system complements the circulatory system and vice versa. In swallowing a little piece of food, teeth, tongue, salivary glands, and muscles, around the mouth and throat, work together until the morsel enters the digestive system. Henceforth, too, many other coordinations occur until the food is digested and absorbed, and subsequently, the required nutrition and vitality is supplied. These processes totally are reflected in the phrase /fa'adalaka/ '***and proportioned you in perfection***'.

Some have interpreted this phrase in the sense of Man's '***standing errect***', his virtue and rank in comparison with other kinds of animals, which corresponds more with the latter stage, but the former meaning is more comprehensive.

Finally, the formation and constitution of Man in comparison with other living creatures comes forth. Comparing him with them, he has well-balanced features, good character and an awakened nature, which is alert and capable of accepting any training and knowledge.

Besides, the contenances of men are different as it is mentioned in **Sura Rūm, No.30, verse 22** which says: ***"And among His Signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the variation in your languages and your colours..."***

In addition to the external differences, there are many internal ones, as well, such as talents and tastes which are organized and arranged in some forms that requires only His knowledge, to establish a safe and sound society, complete for all of them; to supply the required necessities, and the internal and external powers of men to be complements of each other.

On the whole, *Allah* has created Man in the best of moulds, as **Sura Tīn, No. 95, verse 4** says: ***"We have indeed created Man in the best of moulds."***

In short, through the above verses, as well as in many other verses of the Qur'an, *Allah* wants the forgetful arrogant Man to try to know himself. He should research his existence from the very beginning, which means his creation in his mother's womb to the time when he is born, and from then until he matures and develops, in order to understand that in every stage and at every moment he has been receiving abundant new blessings from his Great Lord, and not to be neglectfully arrogant; by accepting His Lordship, worships Him.

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Then, the Qur'an refers to the origin of their neglectful arrogance and says:

***"Nay! but you disbelieve in the (Day of) reckoning".***

Neither *Allah*'s generosity nor His kindness is the origin of your carelessness, but the lack of belief in the ***Day of Judgment*** is the main cause for your arrogance.

Verily, when we seek deep into the souls of most neglectful arrogant ones we find doubt and denial of the ***Hereafter*** within them, while all their other words and deeds are mere excuses. That is why the more the basis of faith and belief in the ***Resurrection***, in those hearts, are strengthened, the less this negligence and carelessness will remain there.

The term / dīn /, in this verse, means '***punishment***' and the '***Day of Reckoning***' , and that some have suggested '***Islam***' as a probable meaning of it seems inappropriate, because the main theme of the verses, here, is ***Resurrection.***

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Then, in order to remove the factors effective in arrogance and carelessness and to strengthen the belief in the ***Resurrection,*** it says:

"***And surely there are Watchers over you,***"

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"***Honourable scribes***".

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"***They know (and understand) whatever you do.***"

The term / hāfiẓīn /, used in the above verse, means '***some special angels who are scribes for the good and evil deeds of men, and with protection preserve them***'; the ones who are called /raqīb/ '***watcher, guardian***' , and / 'atīd / '***ready***' in **Sura Qāf, No.50, verse 18** which says: "***Not a word does he utter, but that there is a sentinel over him, ready (to note it)***". And, also, in the same Sura verse 17 says: "***When the two receivers (guardian angels) receive (his doings and note them) one sitting on the right and one on the left***".

Some other verses of the Qur'an point to the existence of these guardian angels, too.

Undoubledly, *Allah,* sooner and better than anyone else, is a watcher and a witness to Men's deeds, but, for emphasis and to make men feel their responsibility more acutely, He has appointed, over them, a number of angels that witness, some of which are the very ones that we have spoken about.

In addition to them, there are other protectors who have surrounded Man from every side, all of whom, by the name of '***witnesses of the Hereafter,***' are categorized in seven divisions:

The first witness is *Allah* Who says: *"... and whatever deed ye (Mankind) may be doing, We are Witnesses thereof ...",* **( Sura Yunus, No. 10, verse 61 ).**

The second are the prophets and the vicegerents of the prophets: *"How then if We brought from each Prophet a witness, and We brought thee as a witness against these (people)"* **,(Sura Nisāa, No. 4, verse 41).**

Then, the tongue, hands and feet or Man's limbs, in general, are witnesses: *"On the Day when their tongues, their hands, and their feet will bear witness against them as to their actions",* **( Sura Nūr, No. 24, verse 24).**

Another witness is Man's skin: *"They will say to their skin: 'Why bear you witness against us?' "* **, ( Sura Hā-Mīm, No. 41, verse 21).**

Angels are witnesses as stated in **( Sura Qāf, No. 50, verse 21),** and as the verse above denotes.

The land on which Man lives and commits good or evil deeds is a witness: *"On that Day will she (the Earth) recount (all) her news",* **(Sura Zilzāl, No. 99, verse 4).**

And the final classification of witnesses is the time when the actions are done. It bears witness, against Men, that they have committed certain deeds in their life.

Tabarsi cites in his book ' Ihtijāj ' that once someone asked Imam Sādiq *(p.b.u.h.)* what the reason was that there are some appointed angels for scribing Man's good and evil deeds when it is known that *Allah* is aware of all things irrespective of their being obvious or hidden. He answered: *"Allah invited those angels to His worship and appointed them as witnesses over His servants in order that they be the most careful of their obedience to Allah and least committers of sin because of the angel's presence. There is many a servant who decides to commit a sin, but when he remembers their presence he stops and says: 'My Lord sees me and the angels are appointed to witness the deeds.' Moreover, Allah, with His Grace, kindly appointed them, by His leave, to protect the servants from stubborn Satans by banishing them and also to keep the servants safe from numerous harmful animals and pests of the land, which are not seen until the time when Allah orders it and the end of their lives has come."* [1]

It is clearly understood from this narration that angels, in addition

1 Nūr-uth-Thaqalayn, vol. 5, p. 522.

to being scribes for Man's deeds, protect him against unpleasant events, pests, and Satans' temptations.

It is noteworthy that in the above verses these angels are characterized as '***Honourable Scribes***' in order to make Man aware of being more careful about his own deeds, because the higher position the watchers of Man's deeds have, the more careful Man is before them and is more ashamed of committing sins.

The term '***scribes***' , used in this verse, is for emphasis, in that they are not satisfied with only memorizing the actions, but they also record them all precisely and then nothing will be left unrecorded or ommitted; from the smallest item to the largest.

And the sentence: ***'They know (and understand) whatever you do',*** is also another emphasis on this fact that they are perfectly vigilant of everything you do and their record is completed according to the same knowledge.

By the way, all these details denote to Man's free-will, because if Man were not free there would be no reason or aim for appointing these guardian angels or for their records which contain so much information and warnings for him.

On the other hand, all of the details make this fact clear that the divine punishments and rewards are very severe and serious, since *Allah* has counted them extremely important for Mankind.

Regard for this fact and believing in it are enough to train Man and make him familiar with his responsibilities and, consequently, keep him far away from evils and corruptions.

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***Explanation:***

***The Angels; The Scribes***:

Not only in the above verses, but, also in many other verses of the Qur'an and in Islamic narrations, this idea has come to light that *Allah* has appointed some angels to protect Man and to scribe his deeds, both good and evil, preparing his record for the ***Day of Judgement.***

In the Islamic narrations there are some meaningful qualities mentioned about these angels as a warning to Man, among which are the following:

1. Someone asked Imam Musā-ibn-Ja'far *(p.b.u.h.), "Are the two angels, appointed for recording Man's deeds, aware of his intention and inner decision when he wants to do a good or an evil action?"*

*"Is the odor of sewage and perfume the same?"* Imam *(p.b.u.h.)* asked him and he answered: " *No*". Imam *(p.b.u.h.)* then told him: "*When a person decides to do a good action, his breath becomes sweet. The angel on his right (the scribe of the good deeds) tells the angel on his left to stand up, because he has intended to do good; and when the person fulfills it his tongue, as a pen, and his saliva, as the ink, are used by the angel to record it. But, when he decides to do an evil action his breath becomes fetid, and the angel on his left tells the angel on the right to stand up, because he has intended to do evil. And when he concludes the act his tongue, as a pen, and his saliva, as the ink, are again used by the angel to scribe it.*" [1]

This tradition clearly indicates that Man's intention affects his whole entity and angels will be informed of his inner secrets by his outer signs. Certainly, they could not scribe the deeds correctly if they were not aware of Man's intentions, because the value of an action relates fully to the kind of intention Man has. The Prophet *(p.b.u.h.),* too, in his famous tradition likewise concurred.

Another thing that is understood from the above tradition is that some means, which are used for Man, are taken from himself.

2. The guardian angels are to note down a good deed on the record when the person intends to do good, and when he fulfills it they scribe it ten-fold, but when he intends to commit sin they will not note it down until he fulfills the act, then they scribe only one strike against him. [2]

This shows the Grace and Mercy of *Allah* for Man. He forgives him his intention of doing sin and the punishment of the sin is equal according to Justice, but He gives him a good-deed for each intention of obedience, and rewards him according to His ***Graciousness*** not to His ***Justice.*** This encourages Man to do good.

3. Another tradition from the Prophet *(p.b.u.h.)* says that he, after

1 Usūl-i-Kāfi, vol. 2, Chapter: Good or Evil Action, Tradition 3.

2 Ibid., Traditions 1 and 2.

pointing to the two Guardian angels who scribe each good action of a servant ten-fold, said: "*When a person does an evil, the angel on the right tells the angel on the left not to hasten in scribing the sin, he may do a good action which covers the sin, since Allah says: '...these things that are good remove those that are evil...'* (Sura Hūd, No. 11, verse 114), *or he may repent ... . Then the angel appointed to scribe evils waits about seven hours to see whether he does a good action or repents, if not the angel on the right tells him to note the evil action down in his record*". [1]

4. Another narration from Imam Sādiq says: "*When the believers are sitting in a private meeting and speaking together, the Guardian Angels tell each other that we should leave them alone. Perhaps the believers are discussing something secret that Allah has concealed*". [2]

5. Hazrat Ali *(p.b.u.h.)* advises people toward piety ( taqwā ) and says: "*Know, O' creatures of Allah! that your ownself is a guard over you; your limbs are watchmen and truthful vigil-keepers who preserve (the record of) your actions and the numbers of breaths you take. The gloom of the dark night cannot conceal you from them, nor can closed doors hide you from them. Surely tomorrow is close at hand...*". [3]

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1 Usūl-i-Kāfī, vol. 2, Chapter: Good or Evil Action, Tradition 4.

2 Ibid., based on Nūr-uth-Thaqalayn, vol. 5, p. 110.

3 Nahj-ul-Balāqa, Sermon No. 157 (Arabic Version), No. 160 (English Version).

# Sura Infitar
## (The Cleaving Asunder)

*No. 82 (verses 13-19)*

١٣ اِنَّ الْاَبْـرَارَ لَفِى نَعِيمٍ ○
١٤ وَاِنَّ الْفُجَّارَ لَفِى جَحِيمٍ ○
١٥ يَصْلَوْنَهَا يَوْمَ الدِّينِ ○
١٦ وَ مَا هُمْ عَنْـهَا بِغَآئِبِينَ ○
١٧ وَمَآ اَدْرٰيكَ مَا يَوْمُ الدِّينِ ○
١٨ ثُمَّ مَآ اَدْرٰيكَ مَا يَوْمَ الدِّينِ ○
١٩ يَوْمَ لَا تَمْلِكُ نَفْسٌ لِنَفْسٍ شَيْئًا وَ الْاَمْرُ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلّٰهِ ○

*13. "Surely the Righteous shall be in Bliss,"*
*14. "And surely the Wicked shall be in blazing Fire,"*
*15. "Which they shall enter on the Day of Reckoning,"*
*16. "And never shall they be absent therefrom",*
*17. "And what makes you know what the Day of Reckoning is?"*
*18. "Again, what makes you know what the Day of Reckoning is?"*
*19. "The Day on which no soul shall have aught for (another) soul, and the command that Day shall be (wholly) Allah's."*

### *Commentary:*

***On That Day, No One Does Anything for Anyone.***

Concluding the previous discussion about recording the deeds of men by the angels, the following verses speak about the account of Man on the ***Day of Judgement*** and the end of the Righteous and the Wicked. It says:

***"Surely the Righteous shall be in Bliss",***

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***"And surely the Wicked shall be in blazing Fire".***

The term /abrār/ is the plural form of /bār/ and /barr/ in the sense of '***a pious person***' and the term /berr/, which means any piety, here means both '***pious beliefs***', '***good intentions***' and '***good deeds***'.

The term / naʿīm / is singular and means '***a good thing, a blessing***' and, here, it means '***Heaven, Bliss, Eternal Gardens***'. The term is mentioned in an indefinite form, in Arabic texts, to show its greatness and vastness of which no one knows, but *Allah*. The Arabic special grammatical form of the term, which is used here, is for emphasis and denotes to the resistance and perpetuity of this great Blessing.

The term / fujjār/ is the plural form of / fājir/ which is originally based on the term /fajr/ meaning '***to open wide***' and the phrase /tulūʿ-i-fajr / is used for '***day-break***' as if the curtain of the gloom of the dark night is torn wide open by the dawn; and the term / fujūr / '***wickedness***' is used for the actions of those who tear away the curtain of piety and follow the path of sin and corruption.

The term /jahīm/ is derived from the term /jahm/ which means '***to light a fire***', and then / jahīm / is ' ***a burning-fire*** ' which, in the Qur'an, generally means '***Hell***'.

And by the Sura saying '***that the Righteous are in Bliss and the Wicked are in blazing Fire***' it may mean that even now they are in Bliss and blazing fire, and in this world, too, Heavenly blessings and Hellish punishments encompass them, as **Sura 'Ankabūt, No.29, verse 54** says: ***"...But, of a surety, Hell will encompass the rejecters of Faith".***

Some scholars have said that these ideas are for an avoidable future and in Arabic literature things which are sure to happen in the

future are said in present tense and sometimes the past tense of the verb is used. (The first interpretation is more appropriate with the appearance of the verse, but the second one seems better.)

The next verse further describes more about the destiny of the Wicked. It says:

***"Which they shall enter on the Day of Reckoning".***

If the previous verse means that they are now in the blazing fire, this verse may mean that they will have more blazing fire stronger than this, on the Day of Reckoning. They will feel the perfect practicality of its heat, then.

The term/ yaslaun/ is based on /saly/ which is cited with the meaning of '***entering the fire and suffering its roasting burning pain***', and since in Arabic texts the verb is in the form of future tense, it denotes to continuity and being in the constant company of it.

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And, again, for more emphasis, it says:

***"And never shall they be absent therefrom".***

Many of the commentators have considered this verse as an evidence for the continuity and eternity of the Wicked's punishment. Then they have concluded that '***the Wicked***', mentioned in these verses, are '***the Unbelievers***', because eternity and continuity of the fire is only for the Unbelievers. Therefore, the Wicked are those who do not care for piety, because of lack of faith in the ***Hereafter*** and rejecting the ***Day of Judgement***, not because of the force of base desires all the while having Faith.

This verse is stated in the present tense, which is an emphasis on what was said before: that these kinds of people are not far from the blazing fire; their life, itself, is a ***Hell*** and their graves, according to some Islamic traditions, is a ditch of fire. Thus, the ***Hell*** of this world, the ***Hell*** of the partition and the ***Hell*** of the next world all are now prepared for them.

By the way, this verse depicts that the blazing fire of ***Hell*** never fades, and they will never escape it even for a moment.

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Then to illustrate the importance of that Day, it says:

*"And what makes you know what the Day of Reckoning is?"*

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*"Again, what makes you know what the Day of Reckoning is?"*

When the Prophet *(p.b.u.h.)*, with his vast and profound knowledge about the ***Hereafter*** and the extraordinary insight he had about the ***Creator*** and the ***Resurrection***, about the great and terrible events of that ***Day*** and its considerable horror governing there, was not well acquainted with the ***Hereafter***, the situation of others is obvious.

This statement denotes to the fact that the horrible events of the ***Hereafter*** are so great and vast that it cannot be described with our present vocubulary. As we, the dwellers on earth, do not know well about ***Heaven*** and its abundant blessings, we cannot grasp the full concept of the punishment in ***Hell***, and in general, of the ***Final Judgement,*** as well. The question is repeated twice to emphasize this difficulty.

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In the next verse, a simple but, complete and meaningful answer to the above question is suggested which points to one of the qualities of that ***Day***. The answer is suggested by a negative proportion: "***The Day on which no soul shall have aught for (another) soul; and the command That Day shall be (wholly) Allah's.***" Surely, everything in this world, too, is with *Allah,* but, we all depend on one another in proximity, human law and institutions may hold large masses of Mankind in their grip. Here, there are, apparently, worldly rulers, owners, and powerful members with whom some superficial persons, sometimes, consider the source of independant power. But, this period will be all over. Then the ownership is totally His Own and is so perfected that their wills will be in complete consonant with *Allah's* Universal Will, the Absolute Command, on everything and more evident than ever, thenceforward will be wholly with *Allah.*

This is the same fact that is mentioned in many other verses, of the Qur'an, such as **Sura Mo'min, No. 40, verse 16** which says: "***...Whose will be the Dominion that Day? That of Allah, the One, the Irresistible!***" .

As a matter of fact, everyone, on that ***Day,*** is so occupied with himself that if he had any power, he would not pay attention to anyone

else; as **Sura 'Abasa, No. 80, verse 37** confronts it: ***"Each one of them, That Day, will have concern enough to occupy him".***

A tradition from Imam Bāqir ***(p.u.b.h.)*** says: ***"The command that Day and today is wholly Allah's, .... but on the Day of Judgement all the rulers and owners will be removed and there will be no sovereignty except Allah's."*** [1]

A question may arise such as: 'Does that state contrast with the intercession of prophets, saints, and angels ? ' .

The answer simply is this: many verses of the Qur'an verify that intercession is also done by His leave for those who are acceptable, ***"And they offer no intercession except for those who are acceptable..."*****(Sura Anbiyā', No. 21, verse 28)** .

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***Supplication:***

***O Lord! On that horrible Day, everyone hopes for your generosity and, today, we rely on You.***

***O Lord! We seek Your Grace in this world and the Next World: please do not deprive us.***

***O Lord! The absolute command is Yours: save us from polytheism and relying on others.***

**The End**

**Sura Infiṭār**
**(The Cleaving Asunder)**

1 Majma'-al-Bayān, vol. 10, p. 450.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

# Sura Mutaffifin (Defrauders)

*No. 83 (36 Verses)*

***Contents of the Sura:***

Opinions are divided about this Sura on whether it is a Meccan Sura or a Medinan one.

One of the occasions of revelation of the Sura denotes that the beginning verses of the Sura, which are about shortchanging, can be about those tradesmen who dealt in fraud in Medina.

Other verses of the Sura mostly resemble, from the point of tone, the Meccan Suras, whose short and meaningful verses warn of the ***Resurrection*** and the horrible events of the ***Hereafter***. Particularly, the last verses of the Sura, which speak about the mockings of the disbelievers at the believers, match the earlier environment of Mecca where Muslims were in a minority and unbelievers were in a majority.

Perhaps, it is for this reason that some commentators consider a part of the Sura Meccan and another part of it belonging to the Medina period. But, on the whole, this Sura seems chronologically close to the Meccan period.

In any case, the theme of the Sura is divided into five catagories:

1. It seriously warns and threatens the defrauders.
2. It points to the lack of strong belief in the ***Resurrection*** as being the origin of corruption and great sins.
3. There are some hints in this Sura showing the end of the Wicked on ***That Great Day***.
4. It points to some of the great gifts and delightful blessings of the Righteous in the ***Garden of Bliss***.

5. The unbelievers, foolishly mocking at the believers, in this life, and the reverse situation, in the *Hereafter*, is briefly referred to in the Sura.

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***The Virtue in Studying the Sura:***

There is a tradition from the holy Prophet (***p.b.u.h***) that says: "***The person who studies Sura Mutaffifīn (Defrauders), Allah will make him drink of the pure, sealed drink, on That Day.***" [1]

And there is also a narration from Imam Sādiq (***p.b.u.h.***) which says: "***The person who recites Sura Mutaffifīn (Defrauders) in his obligatory prayers, Allah will keep him safe from fire on the Day of Judgement. Then, neither the fire will meet him nor will he meet the fire.***" [2]

These great rewards are for the one who studies it and acts accordingly, of course.

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1 Majma'-al-Bayān, vol. 10, p. 451.

2 Thawāb-ul-a'māl, based on Nūr-uth-Thaqalayn, vol. 5, p. 527.

# Sura Mutaffifin
## (Defrauders)

*No. 83 (verses 1-6)*

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

١ وَيْلٌ لِّلْمُطَفِّفِيْنَ ○

٢ اَلَّذِيْنَ اِذَا اكْتَالُوْا عَلَى النَّاسِ يَسْتَوْفُوْنَ ○

٣ وَاِذَا كَالُوْهُمْ اَوْ وَّزَنُوْهُمْ يُخْسِرُوْنَ ○

٤ اَلَا يَظُنُّ اُولٰٓئِكَ اَنَّهُمْ مَّبْعُوْثُوْنَ ○

٥ لِيَوْمٍ عَظِيْمٍ ○

٦ يَّوْمَ يَقُوْمُ النَّاسُ لِرَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ○

**In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful**

*1. "Woe to the defrauders,"*

*2. "Who, when they take a measure from people, take it in full,"*

*3. "But when they give by measure or weight to men, they cause loss (give less than what is due)."*

*4. "Do they not think that they shall be raised (to life again)?"*

*5. "For a Great Day"*

*6. "The Day when (all) mankind shall stand before the Lord of the Worlds?"*

### *The Occasion of Revelation:*

Ibn-Abbas says that when the Prophet *(p.b.u.h.)* arrived in Medina a large group of tradesmen used to deal fraudulently, then *Allah* sent down these verses and, thereafter, they did not commit further fraud.

Another tradition says that: a large number of the inhabitants of Medina were tradesmen at that time. They used to deal fraudulently and many of their dealings were religiously unlawful. Then, these verses were revealed and the Prophet *(p.b.u.h.)* recited them to the citizens of Medina. He also added: "*There are five for five*". They asked him which '*five*' were for which *five*'. And he answered: "*No nation broke their promise but that Allah set their enemies over them.*"

"*No society passed Judgement without suffering excessive poverty when they were heedless of the laws of Allah.*"

"*No nation fornicated without being faced with abundant fatality.*"

"*No sect committed fraud save those whose crops became rotted and famine plagued them.*"

"*No community refused paying Alms tax except that they were parched by draught.*" [1]

The late Tabarsi has cited about the occasion of revelation of these verses that there was a man in Medina by the name of Abū - Jahīnah who had two scales for measuring: one of them was big, which he used when he wanted to buy things, and the other was small, which was used when he used to sell things. (Then, this Sura was revealed and warned him and the likes of him). [2]

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### Commentary:

***Woe to Those Who Deal in Fraud.***

In these verses, before everything, it addresses the shortchangers and says:

" *Woe to the defrauders*".

This is a threat, indeed, from *Allah* to these arrogant, unmanly oppressors who tread on the rights of the people.

The term /mutaffifīn/ is based on / tatfīf/ derived from /taf/ which means '*the edge of something*'; and everything which is slight or insufficient has been called / tafīf / as well as a measure which is not

1 Tafsīr Fakhr-i-Rāzi, vol. 31, p. 88.

2 Majma'-al-Bayān, vol. 10, p. 452.

completely full viz., the content is up to the edge, but it is not sufficiently full. Then, the different forms of this term have been used for 'shortchanging'.

The word/ wayl/, here, means; '***woe, or a great misfortune, or sorrow, or death, or punishment, or a very hot site in Hell***'. It is usually used when it is meant '***an evil and lowly sense or damnation***'. The word is very short, but it implies many ideas.

It is noteworthy that a narration from Imam Sādiq (***p.b.u.h.***) says that *Allah* has not used the term /wayl/ '***woe***', in the Qur'an, for anyone unless He has called the one a pagan, as He says: "***....and woe to the Unbelievers because of the (coming) Judgement of a momentous Day***",(**Sura Maryam. No. 19, verse 37.**). [1]

Thus, by this narration we understand that '***dealing in fraud***' is akin to '***paganism***'.

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"***Who, when they take a measure from people, take it in full.***"

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"***But when they give by measure or weight to men; they cause loss (give less than what is due)***".

Some of the commentators have understood from the above verse that /mutaffif/ '***a defrauder***' is a person who takes more than his right when he buys something and gives less than what is due when he sells it, and *Allah* has used the word '***woe***' against him, in both cases.

However, this idea is wrong because the term / yastaufūn/ means that they take their right fully, but, there is nothing in verse 2 which indicates that they take something more than what is their right.

In comparison with these two circumstances of when they buy something they take it in full, but, when they must give in full what is due from them, they do not and cause a loss, *Allah* curses them.

This is noteworthy, too, that in dealing, with others, when they take their own right, it is speaking of '***measure***' and they take measure in full, but when they are going to give people's rights to them, it is speaking of both '***measure and weight***' and they give them less than what

1 Usūl-i-Kāfī, based on Nūr-uth-Thaqalayn, vol. 5, p. 527.

is their due. This difference in the usage, of the words, may be due to one of the following reasons:

The first is that, in old times when wholesale trades used to occur the buyers mostly used big measures because, scales were not big enough for weighing very heavy loads, but smaller measures were more suitable and easily available. However, in selling things they had both wholesale (by measures) and retail (by weights).

The second is that for taking a share, it is more suitable to use '*measure*' because, shortchanging is more easy when weighing things and provides a greater possibility to commit fraud.

This point is also notable that though the verses speak about shortchangers, undoubtedly '*fraud*' must be taken, here, in a more general sense: It consists of giving short measure and short weight, but it covers much more than that. It includes any shortchanging in numericals, (the countable items which are sold one by one). Or, it may include lazy workers or employees who do their duty insufficiently: so the verses condemn even them.

Some commentators consider a broader scope for the meaning of the verses. They say that any changes in '*limits set by Allah*' and any deterioration in social relations and morals may be involved. Although there is no clear implication about them in the verses, the idea is not inappropriate.

Hence, it is narrated from ' Abdullāh - ibn - Mas'ūd , a companion of the Prophet's (*p.b.u.h.*), who said : "***Prayer is measurable. If one fills its measure completely (and says a prayer perfectly) Allah will give him a complete reward, but if not, Allah's word about Mutaffifīn (defrauders) will be against him, too.***" [1]

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Then, to threaten them (the defrauders) reproachfully, it questions:

"***Do they not think that they shall be raised (to life again)?***"

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"***For a Great Day***".

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1 Majma'-al-Bayān, vol. 10, p. 452.

On the day whose account, punishment, and primary events and horrors are all great.

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***"The Day when (all) mankind shall stand before the Lord of the Worlds?"***

That is, if they believed in the *Hereafter* and they knew an account will be given there, and all their deeds are recorded for the *Judgement*, before the Lord, and whoever has done an atom's weight of good or evil shall behold it on *That Great Day*, they would not commit oppression and would never tread on the rights of anyone.

Many of the commentators took the term /yazunnu/, based on the term / zann /, to mean '*conviction*'. It resembles **Sura Baqarah, No. 2, verse 249** which says: ***"...But those who were convinced that they must meet Allah said: 'How oft, by Allah's will, hath a small force vanquished a big one?'..."***

A tradition from Hazrat Ali *(p.b.u.h)* for the commentary of the verse attests to the idea. He said about the meaning of the verse: ***"Do they not think that they shall be raised (to life again)"***, that it renders: ***"Are they not sure that they will be raised (to life again)?"*** [1]

It has also been narrated that he said: ***"There are two kinds of /zann/ 'imagination': one is 'of doubt' and the other is 'of conviction'. What are given in the Qur'an about Resurrection are those of the ' imagination of conviction' and what are given about the World are those of the imagination 'of doubt'."*** [2]

It is notable that, as Rāqib has said in his book *Mufradāt*, the term /zann/ basically is a word used for that case which happens in a person's mind where there are some implications in a person's thoughts about something. If they are convincing, the knowledge and confidence rise, but if they are feeble, there will be a mere '*delusion*'.

Thus, the term /zann/ ***'imagination'***, inspite of its present day usage, has a broad meaning in the Qur'an that consists of the sense of both '***knowledge***' and '***apprehension***'. It has been used sometimes with the former meaning and sometimes with the latter one.

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1 Borhān, Commmentary, vol. 4, p. 38.

2 Nūr-al-Thaqalayn, vol. 5, p. 528.

***Explanation:***

***'Dealing in Fraud' is One of the Factors of Mischief in the Land.***

The Holy Qur'an frequently condemns fraud, for example, in the story of Shu'ayb in **Sura Shu'arā, No.26, verses 181 to 183** it says: *"Give just measure, and cause no loss (to others by fraud)." "And weigh with scales true and upright". "And withhold not things justly due to men, nor do evil in the land, working mischief."*

Hence, dealing in fraud unjustly, with measure or weight, is counted as working mischief in the land. This is an evidence for the idea that shortchanging is one of the aspects of social evils.

And, also, in **Sura Rahmān, No.55, verses 7-8**, justice in weights, which should be applied by people, is counted of the Balance of the firmament which *Allah* raised high, where it says: *"And the firmament has He raised high, and He has set up the Balance (of Justice)," "In order that you may not transgress (due) balance."* This means that justice and balance of the scale should be observed seriously, because it is an important factor not only in social affairs, but it is, in fact, a part of the balance the regulation in all the world that *Allah* has created.

For the same reason, the great leaders of Islam have paid much attention to it. For example, *Asbaq-ibn-Nabatah* has quoted from Hazrat Ali *(p.b.u.h)* that when he was on the pulpit, he said: *"O tradesmen! 'practical theology' is first then trade."* And he repeated it thrice, then finally added: *"A tradesman is a wicked man and a wicked man will be in Hell except for those who take their right in justice and give people's right (in full)".* [1]

Another narration from Imam Bāqir *(p.b.u.h.)* says that when Amir-al-Mo'mineen Ali *(p.b.u.h.)* was in Kūfa, every morning he used to enter the markets and walk through them carrying a whip with him over his shoulder (for the punishment of the offenders). He would stand in the middle of the market and call: *"O traders, fear Allah!"*. When people heard his voice they dropped what they were doing and listened to his words carefully. Then he said: *"Ask Allah for goodness, and be easy in your dealing with people, to be blessed. And approach the customers (in dealing), and make patience a model of decorum for yourself. And restrain*

1 Al-Kāfī, vol. 5, Chapter: 'Trade'.

***from swearing; and avoid telling lies. Stand against cruelty, and treat the oppressed justly. Do not approach usury. Give just measure and weight, nor withhold from the people the things that are their due: commit not evil in the land with intent to do mischief.***"

And, also, as it was mentioned for the occasion of revelation of the verses, the Prophet *(p.b.u.h.)* said: "***No sect committed fraud save those whose crops rotted and famine plagued them.***"

As a consequence from the above words, we find out that the use of short weights has been one of the great factors of destruction and punishment for some of the past generations which caused disturbances in their economical order, and the descent of Divine Punishment.

It has been emphasized even in Islamic traditions about business behaviours that believers should give others a bit more when measuring or weighing something, and take from others a bit less than that which is due. This is opposite to what is mentioned in these verses about the treatment of the defrauders, "***Who when they take a measure from people, take it in full,***" "***But when they give by measure or weight to men, they cause loss (give less than what is due.)***".

On the other hand, as it was mentioned before, '***fraud***' has such a broad meaning that envelops any shortchanging in any business or problem or responsibility whether they are personal or social or Divine.

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# Sura Mutaffifin
## (Defrauders)

*No. 83 (verses 7-10)*

٧ كَلَّآ إِنَّ كِتَٰبَ ٱلْفُجَّارِ لَفِى سِجِّينٍ ○
٨ وَمَآ أَدْرَىٰكَ مَا سِجِّينٌ ○
٩ كِتَٰبٌ مَّرْقُومٌ ○
١٠ وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِّلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ○

*7. "Nay! Most surely the Record of the Wicked is (preserved) in Sijjīn."*

*8. "And what informs you of what 'Sijjīn' is ?"*

*9. "(It is) a Register (fully) inscribed."*

*10. "Woe, That Day, to the deniers,"*

**Commentary:**

***What Informs You What 'Sijjīn' Is?***

To follow the theme of the former verses about shortchangers, and the relation between sin and the lack of strong belief in the ***Day of Judgment,*** a part of the destiny of the Wicked on ***That Day*** is mentioned in the next verses.

At first, it says that they, in vain, think that there is no Record of account given in the ***Hereafter***, but,

***"Nay! Most surely the Record of the Wicked is (preserved) in 'Sijjīn',".***

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***"It is a Register (fully) inscribed."***

There are mainly two commentaries for these verses:

1. The meaning of / kitāb /, here, is the record of Man in which all the deeds, irrespective of great or small, are exactly inscribed.

The term / sijjīn / means a '***register***' wherein the deeds (of all Mankind are recorded. In other words, it is like a ledger where the account of the creditors and the debtors are registered on separate pages, one by one. The thing that is understood, from this verse and the next verses, is that all the deeds of the Wicked are registered in a book by the name of '***Sijjīn***' and all the deeds of the ***Righteous*** are registered in another book by the name of '***Illiyīn***'.

The term / sijjīn / is based on / sijn / which has different meanings, such as: '***prison, hard, anything hard, a terrible place in the bottom of Hell***'; the place where the records of the Wicked are held, and it is a proper name for the fire of ***Hell.***

Tarīhī says in Majma'-al-Bahrain for the root word of /sijn/: "***It is mentioned in the commentary that it is 'a complete work' comprising the deeds of the Wicked, of Jinn and of mankind.***" (Tarīhī has not made it clear as to whose commentary this is).

The symmetries that attest to the above idea are as follows:

1. The term / kitāb / '***book***', in cases like this in the Holy Qur'an, means '***Record***'.

2. The last verse, which has come as a description for the term '***sijjīn***', says: "***(It is) a Register (fully) inscribed***". Some commentators have not taken the verse as a description for '***sijjīn***', but, this idea certainly does not apply to the apparent meaning of the words.

3. Some have said that the term / sijjīn / and / sijjīl / have the same meaning. And we know that /sijill/ means: '***a grand book***'.

4. It is understood, from the verses of Qur'an, that the deeds of all Mankind are inscribed, in several books, so that no one will have any excuse for their deeds.

The first '***book***' is the personal record of the individuals, which will be given to the hand of its owner: for the ***Righteous*** to their right hand, and for the evildoers to their left hand; and there are many verses, in the Qur'an, that verify this idea.

The second is the one that can be called '***The Record of the Sects***', as mentioned in **Sura Jāthiya, No.45, verse 28** which says: "***...Every sect will be called to its Record...***".

The third one is the Record of all humankind: The ***Wicked*** and the ***Righteous***. The '***book***' that, in these verses and the following ones, has been called '***Sijjīn***' for the former and '***Illiyīn***' for the latter.

In short, according to this commentary, '***Sijjīn***' is the ledger, the complete work, in which all the deeds of the Wicked are recorded. It is called '***Sijjīn***', perhaps for the reason that its contents cause the Wicked to be imprisoned in ***Hell***. Or, the book, itself, is in the bottom of Hell, in contrast with the book of the ***Righteous***, which is in '***Illiyīn*** of ***Heaven***.

2. The second commentary says that '***Sijjīn***' means ***'Hell'***, which is a very big prison for the Wicked, or it is a terrible site in Hell, and the meaning of '***The Record of the Wicked***' is '***the destiny of the Wicked***' which is inscribed for them. Therefore, the verse means: surely the destiny of the Wicked is in ***Hell***. There are many examples of the application of the meaning of the term '***book***', in the Holy Qur'an, with this sense. For instance, in **Sura Nisā, No. 4 verse 24**, after saying that: "***And (prohibited are) all married women except those whom your right hands possess***", it says: " ... / ***kitāballāh 'alaykum /, (this is) Allah's ordiance to you...***".And, **Sura Anfāl, No.8, verse 75** says: "***...kindred by blood have prior rights over each other in the ordiance of Allah...***".

The matter that attests to this commentary is that '***Sijjīn***' has been commented on as being ***Hell,*** the same meaning as the narrations and Islamic works have.

In the commentary of 'Ali - ibn - Ibrāhīm for the meaning of the verse: "***Nay! Most surely the Record of the Wicked is (preserved) in Sijjīn***", it is said that: their appointed chastisement is in '***Sijjīn***', (Hell).

A narration from Imam Bāqir ***(p.b.u.h.)*** also says:
" ***'Sijjīn' is the seventh earth and 'Illiyīn' is the seventh heaven (indicating the lowest and the highest places)***". [1]

There are many narrations which say that the deeds which are not fit to be accepted by *Allah* will descend and fall in Sijjīn. A tradition from the Prophet ***(p.b.u.h.)*** says that: "***Sometimes it happens that the***

1 Nūr-uth-Thaqalayn, vol. 5, p. 530, Tradition 15.

***appointed angel, for gathering up the deeds of a servant, ascends joyfully with a good deed of the servant. Then Allah says: 'Put it in Sijjīn, because the servant did not seek My Countenance in it'."*** [1]

On the whole, it is understood from the narrations that '***Sijjīn***' is a very low place in ***Hell,*** where the wrong actions or the record of the evil deeds of the Wicked are sent to, or their destiny is for them to be imprisoned therein.

According to this commentary, the verse "***(It is) a Record (fully) inscribed***" is an emphasis on the verse "***...Most surely the Record of the Wicked is (preserved) in Sijjīn***", ( not as a commentary for Sijjīn ). Then the verse means that this is a punishment inscribed for them, surely.

The term / mārqum / is based on /raqm/ '***large, bold writing***' and since these writings are clear and unambigous, the term may refer to the decisiveness and clearness of it.

These two commentaries can be considered together, because in the first commentary '***Sijjīn***' means '***the ledger of the deeds of the Wicked***', and in the second one it means ***Hell*** or the bottom of the earth. And it is clear that these are '***causes and effects***' for each other. That is, when the record of a person is registered in '***the ledger of the deeds of the Wicked***', it results in their being sent to the lowest point of ***Hell.***

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In the last verse of this portion, in a startling short sentence, the end to come of those who deny the ***Resurrection*** is pointed out. It says: "***Woe That Day, to the deniers.***"

It is the denial from which the various sins,including dealing in fraud and transgression,originate. In the first verse it says: "***Woe to the defrauders',*** and now it says: " ***Woe, That Day, to the deniers***", which briefly,but meaningfully,points to the kinds of painful and horrible chastisements awaiting them.

It is noteworthy that in the first verse '***the defrauders***' and then in verse seven, '***the Wicked***' and in verse ten '***the deniers***' are mentioned. This shows that there is a close connection between denying the ***Resurrection*** and those deeds. The relationship between these will be dealt with more clearly in the following verses.

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1 Nūr-uth-Thaqalayn, vol. 5, p. 530, Tradition 19.

# Sura Mutaffifin
## (Defrauders)

*No. 83 (verses 11-17)*

١١ اَلَّذِينَ يُكَذِّبُونَ بِيَوْمِ الدِّينِ ○
١٢ وَ مَا يُكَذِّبُ بِهٖٓ اِلَّا كُلُّ مُعْتَدٍ اَثِيمٍ ○
١٣ اِذَا تُتْلٰى عَلَيْهِ اٰيَاتُنَا قَالَ اَسَاطِيرُ الْاَوَّلِينَ ○
١٤ كَلَّا بَلْ رَانَ عَلٰى قُلُوبِهِمْ مَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ○
١٥ كَلَّآ اِنَّهُمْ عَنْ رَبِّهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ لَمَحْجُوبُونَ ○
١٦ ثُمَّ اِنَّهُمْ لَصَالُوا الْجَحِيمِ ○
١٧ ثُمَّ يُقَالُ هٰذَا الَّذِي كُنْتُمْ بِهٖ تُكَذِّبُونَ ○

*11. "Those who deny the Day of Judgement"*

*12. "And none denies it but every Transgressor, the Sinner!"*

*13. "When Our Signs are recited to him, he says: 'Myths of the ancients'."*

*14. "Nay! Rather what they used to do has put rust upon their hearts."*

*15. "Nay, most surely on That Day they shall be debarred from their Lord,"*

*16. "Then, they will enter the fire of Hell."*

*17. "Then it will be said (to them): 'This is that which you used to deny.'"*

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### *Commentary:*

***Sin Works as Rust Upon the Heart.***

The previous verses made clear the dreadful end of the unbelievers. The following verses begin with an introduction to unbelievers also. It says: *"Those who deny the Day of Judgement."*

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*"And none denies it but every Transgressor, the Sinner!"*

It means that the denial of the Day of Judgement is not based on reasoning and logical thinking, but those who want to be oppressors, whenever they wish, and to be the sinners of any corruption, take joy in denying the *Hereafter.*

They want to continue their evil deeds, freely and without thinking about their responsibilities. They do not pay attention to their conscience. They know no laws. The case is similar as can be found in **Sura Qiyāmat, No. 75, verse 5.** It says: *"But man wishes to do wrong (even) in the time in front of him,"* (then he denies the *Hereafter*).

Hence, as belief has an affect on deeds, the same evil deeds affect on the formation of beliefs. This very idea will be divulged, clearly, in the commentary of the next verses.

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Now, the third characteristic of the deniers of the Hereafter is mentioned. It says:

*"When Our Signs are recited to him, he says: 'Myths of the ancients' ".*

They are not only *Transgressors* and *Sinners,* but mock the Signs of *Allah* and say that they are old myths like a series of ancient stories belonging to the very early periods of Man, which have no real value. In this way, and under the pretext of calling them myths, they want to withdraw themselves from the duties that the verses of the Qur'an define for them.

The sinners raise the subject as an excuse to flee from the truth and do not accept *Allah's* invitation. This idea is mentined not only in this verse, but there are also nine other verses that denote just the same matter, about the sinners, and their excuse of calling these myths including **Sura Furqān, No. 25, verse 5** which says: *"And they say:*

*'Tales of the ancients, which he has caused to be written: and they are dictated before him morning and evening'."*

In **Sura Ahqaf, No. 46, verse 17** when an ungodly son is being advised by his godly parents that the promise of *Allah* is true and all will be called to life again, after death, he mocks their words and says: *"...this is nothing but tales of the ancients."*

However, wrong doers always seek some vain excuses to make their conscience content, on the one hand, and to get rid of the just people's protests, on the other hand. It is a wonder how these kind of persons have often had some similar behaviour, as if they had been whispering the same things into each others ears throughout history, matters such as: sorcery, divination, madness, myths and the like.

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The Holy Qur'an points to the main origin of their wickedness in the next verse where it says:

*"Nay! Rather what they used to do has put rust upon their hearts."*

What an alarming sense it is! What they do works as rust on their hearts and vanishes the first light and the early brightness that is really from the divine nature which *Allah* created in them. That is why the characteristic of truth, the shine of Revelation; with its full beaming brightness, does not reflect on their hearts.

The Qur'anic term / rān / is based on /rayn/ (rust). As Rāqib says in Mufradāt, it means: *'the coating or film formed on the precious things'*. And some other philologists meant it as *'the redish-brown or redish yellow coating formed on iron or steel, and the like, by oxidation'*; as occurs during exposure to air and moisture and it is usually a sign of the decay of the metal. Then, as a consequence, naturally its radiance disappears.

There will be a description, under the title of ***'Explanation'*** that you will study later about the destructive effects of sin which dulls the light and radiance of the heart, even to the point of wiping it out.

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*"Nay, most surely on that Day they shall be debarred from their Lord."*

And this is the most painful punishment of the evildoers in contrast with the spiritual meeting and the presence of the Righteous before their Lord, which is the best of blessings and the highest reward for them.

The term / kallā / *'Nay'* is usually used to negate a previous statement. For this case, commentators have delivered many probabilities; some of which are as follows:

It is an emphasis on the term '*Nay*', in the former verse, and it is not true what they say about the ***Hereafter*** being myths of the ancients.

Or, it is not so that the rust, which sin causes upon their hearts, will be wiped off. They shall be debarred from seeing *Allah* both in this world and the Next.

Or, as it is said in some other verses of the Qur'an, that they think that even if they are brought back to their Lord, they shall surely be given some kind of blessings there.

It is not as they think, though, and they will have the worst punishments and the most severe tortures in the ***Hereafter***.

Truly, there will be a return, to us, of our worldly actions in the ***Hereafter***. Those who neglect the truth, in this life, and their deeds have affected their hearts like rust, will be deprived from the Mercy of *Allah* and will never be able to see His appearance in the spiritual world, and they will never meet Him; the Sublime.

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***"Then, they will enter the fire of Hell."***

This entrance into the fire, is the result of deprivation from *Allah*, and nothing else. Verily, the heat of this deprivation is hotter than the heat of the fire of ***Hell***, itself.

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***"Then it will be said (to them): 'This is that which you used to deny'."***

This declaration is given them to scorn them and the blame is a spiritual punishment for this group of stubborn, arrogant ones.

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***Explanations:***

***Why Does Sin Work As Rust Upon The Heart?***

Not only in this verse, but also in many other verses of the Holy Qur'an it talks frankly about the effect of sin in darkening the heart.

Once, in **Sura Mo'min, No.40, verse 35** it says: *"Thus does Allah seal up every heart – of arrogant obstinate Transgressors."*

Then another time, in **Sura Baqarah, No. 2, verse 7** describing a group of stubborn sinners, it says: *"Allah hath set a seal on their hearts and on their hearing, and on their eyes is a veil; great is the penalty they (incur)."*

And **Sura Hajj, No. 22, verse 46** says: *"Truly it is not their eyes that are blind, but their hearts which are in their breasts."*

Verily, the worst result of continual sinning is a heart sealed up, which is the extinguisher of the light of knowledge. The substance of sin flows from the limbs to the heart and changes it into something like a stagnant swamp. It is in this condition that Man cannot distinguish between good and evil, and commits such horrific wrongs that everyone becomes astonished.

This self-destructive sinner undermines himself and ruins his own happiness by his own hands.

There is a tradition from the holy Prophet *(p.b.u.h.)* which says: *"Abundant sins cause the heart to decay."* [1] And another tradition from him *(p.b.u.h.)* says: *"When a servant commits a sin, a black stain appears on his heart. If he repents and leaves off committing the sin and asks for forgiveness from Allah, his heart will be polished. And if he digresses again, the stain will spread until it covers his heart completely. This is the very rust that Allah has mentioned in the Holy Qur'an in the verse that says: 'Nay! Rather what they used to do has put rust upon their hearts'."* [2]

The same idea has been narrated from Imam Sādiq *(p.b.u.h.)* with a slight difference in Usūl-i-Kāfī.

And, in the same book, there is another tradition from the Prophet *(p.b.u.h.)* that says: *"Speak with each other, and visit each other, and tell of the traditions (of ours). Surely the traditions refine the hearts.*

1 Durr-al-Manthūr, vol. 6, p. 326.

2 Ibid., p. 325.

***Verily, hearts become rusted as a sword does, and the traditions are the polish."*** [1]

It has also been proved psychologically that Man's behaviour reflects on his soul and gradually varies it to that qualification. It is effective in his thought and ***Judgment,*** even.

It is also notable that the more Man continues sinning, the thicker the darkness covers his soul until the point where he considers his evil deeds as his good deeds and he is even sometimes proud of them. At this time the back doors are shut and the bridges are broken for him to return. This is the most dangerous position that a person can be in.

***A Curtain Over The Spirit***:

Although many of the commentators have tried to insert something into the verse: ***'Nay, most surely on That Day they shall be debarred from their Lord',*** and say: the sinners shall be debarred from '***the mercy***' or '***the honour***' or '***the reward***' of *Allah*, the verse apparently does not need anything added, but, they are really debarred from Him; while the ***Righteous*** will meet with *Allah* in ***Heaven*** and enjoy the greatest possible pleasure there, where the Sinners, the Hellish Disbelievers, are deprived of that (Him); the unmatched blessing.

Some good-doers of the believing people may have that emanation even in this world, but the wrong doers never will.

In one respect, the former are always in front of *Allah*, but the latter are so far from Him.

The ***Righteous*** are so delighted in supplicating to Him that it is indescribable, but the sinners are so entangled with their sins that they cannot be saved.

Amir-al-Mo'mineen Ali ***(p.b.u.h.)*** says in his supplication called '***Kumayl***': ***"Supposing that I am able to endure Thy chastisement, how can I endure separation from Thee?".***

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1 Nūr-uth-Thaqalayn, vol. 5, p. 531, Traditions 22 and 23.

# Sura Mutaffifin
## (Defrauders)

*No. 83 (verses 18-28)*

١٨ كَلَّآ اِنَّ كِتٰبَ الْاَبْرٰارِ لَفِى عِلِّيِّيْنَ ○
١٩ وَ مَآ اَدْرٰيكَ مَا عِلِّيُّوْنَ ○
٢٠ كِتٰبٌ مَّرْقُوْمٌ ○
٢١ يَشْهَدُهُ الْمُقَرَّبُوْنَ ○
٢٢ اِنَّ الْاَبْرٰارَ لَفِى نَعِيْمٍ ○
٢٣ عَلَى الْاَرَآئِكِ يَنْظُرُوْنَ ○
٢٤ تَعْرِفُ فِى وُجُوْهِهِمْ نَضْرَةَ النَّعِيْمِ ○
٢٥ يُسْقَوْنَ مِنْ رَّحِيْقٍ مَّخْتُوْمٍ ○
٢٦ خِتٰمُهُ مِسْكٌ وَفِى ذٰلِكَ فَلْيَتَنَافَسِ الْمُتَنَافِسُوْنَ ○
٢٧ وَمِزَاجُهُ مِنْ تَسْنِيْمٍ ○
٢٨ عَيْنًا يَّشْرَبُ بِهَا الْمُقَرَّبُوْنَ ○

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# Sura Mutaffifin

*No. 83 (verses 18-28)*

*18. "Nay, verily the Record of the Righteous is (preserved) in ' 'Illiyīn',"*

*19. "And what explains to thee what ' 'Illiyīn' is?"*

*20. "(It is) a written record,"*

*21. "(Which is) witnessed by the ones Nearest (to Allah).*

*22. "Surely the Righteous will be in Bliss:"*

*23. "(Sitting) on thrones (of Dignity), they will command a sight (of all things):"*

*24. "You will recognize in their faces the radiance of Bliss"*

*25. "Their thirst will be slaked with pure drink sealed"*

*26. "Whose seal is musk, and for that let (all) those strive who strive (for Bliss)"*

*27. "And whose mixture is of 'Tasnīm' "*

*28. "A spring from which drink the ones Nearest (to Allah)."*

## Commentary:

***'Illiyīn is Anticipating the Righteous.***

In contrast to the destiny of the Record of the Wicked, which was described in the previous verses, the following veres talk about the ***Righteous***, whose honour and merits, compared with those of the Wicked, will make the situations of them, both, more clear. At first, to negate their false thoughts about the resurrection, it says:

***"Nay, verily the Record of the Righteous is (preserved) in ' 'Illiyīn'."***

The term / 'illiyīn / is the plural form of / 'ulayy / which basically means '***properly, High places or the persons who sit in high places, or the dwellers of high parts of the mountains***'. Some commentators have rendered it, here, to mean '***a name of the upper part of the skies or upper part of Heaven'.***

Some have also said that the term is mentioned in the plural form for emphasis where it means '***highness over highness***'.

Furthermore, similar to the two commentaries we had about 'Sijjīn', in the former verses, we have the same about ' 'Illīyīn', as well.

The first commentary says that / kitāb-al-abrār / means '***the Record of the Righteous***'. They intend to say that the record of their deeds is registered in a ledger, (a complete work), which shows the whole deeds of all believers, and is in a very high and honourable position.

Or, it means that their record is preserved in the highest and the most honourable abode in ***Heaven*** over their places, all of which illustrate that their own rank is extremely high.

A tradition from the Prophet ***(p.b.u.h.)*** says that ' '***Illīyīn' is the seventh sky and is below 'the throne of Allah'.***

And this is just contrary to the record of the Wicked, which is in the lowest part of ***Hell.***

The second commentary says that / kitāb /, here, means '***destiny***' and '***the definite end***' that *Allah* has defined for the ***Righteous*** in the highest levels of ***Heaven.***

Of course, these two commentaries can also both come together, i.e. their Record is registered in a ledger and the ledger resides totally in heaven. Meanwhile, the Divine command governs high over them concerning the position of the ***Righteous***, themselves, and considers them to be in the highest levels of ***Heaven.***

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Then, to make the greatness and the highness of ' 'Illīyīn' clear, it goes on to say:

"***And what explains to thee what ' 'Illīyīn' is?***"

This means that it is a position beyond the imagination and comprehension, so high that no one, not even the Prophet ***(p.b.u.h)***, can know the peak of its highness.

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Then, the Qur'an, itself, explains it further and says:

"***(It is) a written record***".

This idea is according to the commentary that means: ' 'Illīyīn' is a ledger for the righteous deeds, while according to the second commentary the verse means that this is a decisive destiny that *Allah*

has written for the *Righteous* that their position is in the highest stages of Heaven. (Note> Therefore, '*a written record*' is an interpretation for '*the Record of the Righteous*' not for ' '*Illiyīn*'.).

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"*(Which is) witnessed by the ones Nearest (to Allah)*".

Some of the commentators have interpreted the meaning of '*the ones Nearest (to Allah)*', mentioned in this verse, as being '*the angels that are close to the throne of Allah*', the guardians for the record or the destiny of the Righteous.

The next verses express clearly, that a special group of the elected believers are '*the ones Nearest (to Allah)*' who possess a very high rank and are witnesses to the records of the others from the *Righteous*. As **Sura Wāqi'ah, No .56, verses 10-11**, with the names of the following two groups: '*The Companions of the Right Hand*' and '*The Companions of the Left Hand*', say: "*And those foremost (in faith ) will be foremost (in the Hereafter)*", "*These will be those Nearest (to Allah)*".

And **Sura Nahl, No. 16, verse 89** which says: "*One day We shall raise from all peoples a witness against them, from amongst themselves: and We shall bring thee as a witness against them...*".

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Then, concerning a part of the rewards of the Righteous, it says:

"*Surely the Righteous will be in Bliss.*"

The basic meaning of the term /na'īm/, as Rāqib says, is '*immense blessing*'. Besides that, it is mentioned in an '*indefinite form*' which, here, denotes to its greatness and importance. That is, they possess the blessings and comforts that are indescribable. And this is a complete and hidden definition referring to the whole material and spiritual blessings of *Heaven*.

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Then, to describe some of them, it says:

"*(Sitting) on thrones (of Dignity), they will command a sight (of all things)*".

The term /arā 'ik/ is the plural form of /arīkah/ '*throne*'. Basically, it is used with the meaning of '*a beautiful royal throne*', or '*a couch for the bride in the nuptial chamber*', but, here, it means '*highly decorated seats in*

***Heaven where the Righteous sit'.***

The term / yanzurūn / ***'they look'*** is mentioned, here, without any object or objects and is to be meant in a broad sense: i.e. they look at *Allah's* Mercy, His unique essence, the variety of Divine blessings and the surprising beauties in ***Heaven***. '***They look***', because one of Man's pleasures is '***the pleasure of sight***'.

Thereafter it says:

***"You will recognize in their faces the radiance of Bliss."***

It means that a special refreshment and delight is seen on their faces, so that you need not question them. On the contrary, when you look at the Wicked, you can see grief and sorrow together with pain and misery on their faces.

The term / naḍrah /, as it was mentioned before, means a special refreshment and happiness resulting from the abundance of blessing and comfort seen on the faces of well-off people.

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After discussing about the blessings of '***throne***', '***look***', and '***ease with happiness***', it refers to another blessing: The pure drink of the Righteous. It says:

***"Their thirst will be slaked with pure drink sealed".***

The pure drink of the Next World is not like the devilish drink of this world. It does not bring alcoholism and madness, for committing sin in them, but, it increases their wisdom and intelligence safely and with complete joy.

Most of the commentators have interpreted the term /raḥīq/ in the sense of '***pure drink***', a drink that is not obscene and is not of a polluted mixture; it is flawless. And the term / maxtūm / ***'sealed'*** is used as an emphasis for its pureness, soundness, and a state of being intact.

Moreover, the use of such complete containers is a high honour and respect to the guests; a sealed container whose lid will be opened only by the guests.

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*"Whose seal is musk ...."*

The pure drink of ***Heaven*** is not the same as the sealed wine bottles of this world which are closed tightly sometimes with a wafer of molten wax (or clay) into which is pressed the distinctive seal of the sender or the company, that may make the hands dirty when opening them, but it is sealed with musk and, when it is being opened, it smells like the perfume of musk. At the end of the same verse it says:

*"...and for that let (all) those strive who strive (for Bliss)."*

Tabarsi, the great commentator, says in Majma' - al - Bayān that the term, /tanāfas/, means that two persons long for a worthy thing, each of which tries to obtain the same precious thing that the other one has.

In Majma'-al-Bahrain the term, / tanāfas /, is defined in the sense of '***proceeding the other, or friendly competion***'. Each of them wishes and tries to own the precious thing that the other has.

Rāqib in Mufradāt says: / munāfasah / means '***a man's attempt to be associated with the outstanding people and joining them without causing harm to others***'.

In fact, the meaning of this verse is similar to that of **Sura Hadīd, No. 57, verse 21** which says: *"Be you foremost (in seeking) forgiveness from your Lord, and a Garden (of Bliss), the width whereof is as the width of heaven and earth...".*

Or, it is similar to the meaning of **Sura Āli - 'Imrān, No.3, verse 133** which says: *"Be quick in the race for forgiveness from your Lord, and for a Garden whose width is that of the heavens and the earth...".*

However, the meaning of the verse is the nicest one that can be considered for the encouragement of men, to send them forth for receiving these unmatched blessings by the way of true faith and good deeds. It is a very wonderful evidence to show the eloquence of the Holy Qur'an.

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*"And whose mixture is of 'Tasnīm' ".*

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*"A spring from which drink the ones Nearest (to Allah)".*

It is understood from these verses that / tasnīm / is the highest

drink, among the heavenly pure drinks, which the ones Nearest to *Allah* drink, only, but the ***Righteous*** drink some of / tasnīm /, which is mixed with / rahīq /, '***the pure drink sealed***' , which is another kind of pure drink in Heaven.

Some commentators believe that this pure drink is called / tasnīm / because this spring flows down from ***Heaven***, while some others say that it is a special drink which falls from the sky of ***Heaven.***

The heavenly drinks are different, indeed. Some of them flow in rivers, as many verses of the Qur'an point out, such as is found in **Sura Mohammad, No. 47, verse 15**: ***"...rivers of milk...rivers of wine...rivers of honey..."***.

And some of them are in sealed containers, like the one mentioned in the former verses. The most important one is the drink which falls from ***Heaven*** whose name is 'Tasnīm' , the one that none of the other drinks, in Heaven, can be compared with. Then, the effect that it has on the soul of the Righteous is, consequently, the deepest and the most attractive, whose spiritual pleasure is indescribable.

It is necessary to make note of this truth, again, that these are only some hints to those heavenly facts, indeed, because our human vocabulary cannot describe the unique blessings of Heaven, completely. And even more than that, no one can imagine them, as **Sura Sajdah, No.32, verse 17** says: ***"Now no person knows what delights of the eye are kept hidden (in reserve) for them..."***.

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***Explanation:***

***Who are 'the Righteous' and 'the Ones Nearest to Allah' ?***

The names of / abrār / '***the righteous***' and / muqarrabūn / '***the ones Nearest to Allah***' are frequently highly mentioned in the Holy Qur'an along with their rank and their rewards. They are so high that as **Sura Āli - 'Imrān, No. 3, verse 193** says that '***The men of Understanding***' ask *Allah* that their souls be taken to Himself in the company of the ***Righteous.***

And there are many great rewards mentioned, for them, in the Qur'an including **Sura Insān, No. 76, verses 5-22** and, also, **Sura Infitār, No. 82, verse 13** and some other verses in **Sura Mutaffifīn** talk about *Allah's* Grace, to them, as well.

The term /abrār/ '*the Righteous*' is the plural form of /birr/ and they are the believers who have a great soul and a firm belief and do good deeds. '*The ones Nearest to Allah*', / muqarrabūn /, are those who have a close position to *Allah*. Then, it seems that all '*the ones Nearest to Allah*' are among the *Righteous*, / abrār /, but all of the latter, *Righteous* /abrār /, are not among '*The ones Nearest to Allah*'.

There is a narration from Imam Hassan Mujtaba (the second Imam) which says: "*By Allah, everywhere in the Qur'an where Allah says /inn-al-abrār / (surely the Righteous), He means no one save Ali - ibn - AbūTālib, Fātimah, me, and Hosain*" *(p.b.u.th.)*. [1]

Undoubtedly, the five holy ones, i.e. Mohammad, Ali, Fātimah, Hassan and Hosain *(p.b.u.th.)* are the most clear examples of the *Righteous* and '*the ones Nearest to Allah*' ; and, as it was mentioned in the commentary of **Sura Insān, No. 76**, the very Sura is mainly about Amir-al-Mo'mineen Ali, Fātimah, Hassan and Hosain. Eighteen verses of **Sura Insān** are especially about their achievements, though the revelation of the verses about them does not hinder the broadness and generality of the meaning of those verses.

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***Heavenly Drinks:***

It is clearly understood, from many of the verses of the Holy Qur'an, that there are numerous kinds of pure drink with many names and various qualities, in *Heaven*, that are entirely different from the worldly impure beverages; which are the origins of enmity, murder, and corruption. They are offensive, distasteful, and impure. But, the drinks of *Heaven* are sweet-smelling, perfumed, and purified, so that they increase wisdom, pleasure, and love. Those who drink of them will languor in a kind of spiritual joy and delight that cannot be described. Two varieties of the drinks of Heaven are named in these verses: / tasnīm / and / rahīq - i - maxtūm /, while some other varieties are mentioned in **Sura Insān, No. 76** and even other Suras of the Qur'an, each of which are appropriately explained.

It is interesting to note that the Divine drinks are also the reward for those who avoid drinking the worldly alcoholic drinks, as well as

1 Nūr-uth-Thaqalayn, vol. 5, p. 533 (Tradition 33).

those who quench the needs of the deprived and extinguish the fire of sadness in the hearts of the believers.

Once the holy Prophet *(p.b.u.h.)* told Hazrat Ali *(p.b.u.h.)*: ***"O Ali! the person who leaves drinking wine, Allah will make him a drink from 'the pure drink sealed'".*** [1]

And, it is even more interesting to find that another tradition from him *(p.b.u.h.)* says that if a person leaves off drinking wine even for the sake of anything besides *Allah*, He will make him drink from the pure drink. Hazrat Ali *(p.b.u.h.)* says: ***"I questioned him 'the sake of anything save Allah?", and he answered: "Yes, the person who avoids drinking wine for the sake of protecting his life, Allah will make him a drink from the 'pure drink sealed'".*** [2]

Verily, those who avoid drinking wine for the sake of their health are in fact from *'the men of Understanding'*. And, as it is understood in **Sura Āli - 'Imrān, No.3, verse 193** that *'the men of Understanding'* are also among the Righteous, who drink from the pure drinks of Heaven.

A narration from Ali-ibn-Hosain says: ***"The person who quenches the thirst of a believer, Allah will make him a drink from 'the pure drink sealed'.*** [3]

And, another narration says: ***"The person who fasts on a hot day in summer for the sake of Allah, He will make him a drink from 'the pure drink sealed'."*** [4]

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1 Nūr-uth-Thaqalayn, vol. 5. p. 534, Tradition 35.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 Majma'-al-Bayān, vol. 10, p. 456.

# Sura Mutaffifin

## (Defrauders)

*No. 83 (verses 29-36)*

٢٩ اِنَّ الَّذِينَ اَجْرَمُوا كَانُوا مِنَ الَّذِينَ اٰمَنُوا يَضْحَكُونَ ○
٣٠ وَاِذَا مَرُّوا بِهِمْ يَتَغَامَزُونَ ○
٣١ وَاِذَا انْقَلَبُوا اِلٰٓى اَهْلِهِمُ انْقَلَبُوا فَكِهِينَ ○
٣٢ وَاِذَا رَاَوْهُمْ قَالُوا اِنَّ هٰٓؤُلَآءِ لَضَالُّونَ ○
٣٣ وَمَآ اُرْسِلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ حٰفِظِينَ ○
٣٤ فَالْيَوْمَ الَّذِينَ اٰمَنُوا مِنَ الْكُفَّارِ يَضْحَكُونَ ○
٣٥ عَلَى الْاَرَآئِكِ يَنْظُرُونَ ○
٣٦ هَلْ ثُوِّبَ الْكُفَّارُ مَا كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ ○

*29. "Surely those who committed sin used to laugh at those who believed,"*

*30. "And when they passed by them, they were winking at one another (in mockery;)"*

*31. "And when they returned to their people they returned jesting,"*

*32. "And when they saw them, they said: 'Surely these have gone astray' ".*

*33. "While they had not been sent as guardians over them! "*

*34. "So, on this Day (of Judgement) the Believers will laugh at the Unbelievers:"*

*35. "(Sitting) on thrones (of Dignity) they will command (a sight) (of all things)".*

*36. "Have not the Unbelievers been paid back for what they used to do?"*

### *The Occasion of Revelation:*

The commentators have quoted two occasions of revelation for these verses:

The first is that: Once Hazrat Ali *(p.b.u.h.)* and some of the believers, were passing by a number of pagans from Mecca when the pagans laughed at them and mocked them, then the above verses were revealed and made their destiny clear on the *Day of Judgement.*

Hākim Abul - Qāsim Haskānī has narrated from Ibn-i-Abbas in Shavāhid-al-Tanzīl that: The phrase '*those who were guilty*' targeted the hypocrites of Quraish and '*those who believed*' meant 'Ali-ibn-i-Abūtālib and his devotees.

The second occasion of revelation is that the above verse has been revealed about some people such as: 'Ammār, Suhayb, Khabbāb, Bilāl, and some others of the poor believers who were mocked by some pagans of Quraish like Abūjahl , Walīd - ibn - Muqayrah , and 'Ās-ibn-Wā 'il.

These two occasions of revelation can both be considered together, too.

### *Commentary:*

***Once They Used to Mock the Believers but, Today ...***

The previous verses talked about the great rewards and the blessings of the *Righteous*, while these verses point to a part of the troubles and the difficulties that the believers may be faced with, in this life, for their Faith and Righteousness, to show that those great rewards are not undue.

These verses speak about the position of the pagans and their revolting treatment against the believers. Four varieties of their revolting behaviour are mentioned here. First, it says:

*"Surely those who committed sin used to laugh at those who believed".*

They arrogantly laughed at them to insult them. And the wicked have always been, in this world, smug against the believers.

By the way, the application of the term / ajramū / '*those who committed sin*' instead of the term /kafarū/ '*those who disbelieved*' makes

it clear that the disbelievers can be known by their sinful deeds since disbelief is always the origin of mischief.

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In the next verse, the second wrong action of the unbelievers is mentioned, where it says:

***"And when they passed by them, they were winking at one another (in mockery)".***

In this way and by these innuendoes and sarcasms the unbelievers, having evil motives, want to say that: 'Look! these poor people say that they are the nearest to *Allah* and claim that the divine verses are revealed for them. Look! these foolish people say that the dry and rotten bones will be called to life again! '. Unbelievers usually say some unbecoming and nonsensical words like this.

It seems that the unbelievers' laughs were obviously done when the believers passed by them and their mocking sarcasms were meted out when they passed by the believers. And since they could not laugh at the believers and mock them easily, they winked and made jestures to convey their thoughts to each other. But, when they were in their own gatherings and the believers passed by them they could commit their evils more freely and boldly.

The term /yātaqamazūn/ is derived from /qamz/ which means: ***'to point or wink at anyone or anything which is the object of criticism'***. And sometimes this word is used for any fault-finding, even when it is done orally.

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This refers to their behaviour when they met the believers. But when they went home and they had private meetings with their family members and their relatives they continued mocking in the absense of the believers. They explained happily how they had mocked them. So the next verse says:

***"And when they returned to their people they returned jesting".***

They talked to each other so proudly and boastingly as if they had won a great victory.

The term /fakihīn/ is the plural form of /fakih/ which is based on

/fakāhah / which means '*to be joyful*' and '*to laugh*'. It is originally derived from / fākihah / with the meaning of '*fruit*'. It seems that these frivolities and amusements are like sweet juicy fruit of which they find pleasure in. Also, friendly sweet speaking is called / fukāhah /.

Though the term /ahl/ usually means '*family*' and '*relatives*' , it may have a broader meaning, here, and includes '*close friends*', too.

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Their fourth evil action against the believers was that:

"*And when they saw them, they said 'Surely these have gone astray'* ".

Since the believers had left the belief and the worship of the gods that the unbelievers used to follow, so, the wrongdoers thought of the believers' Faith; believing in *Allah*, as a wrong way and said that they had gone astray.

The type of behaviour that the unbelievers had may refer to the early period of Islam, when they did not think of the Divine Religion as a serious and everlasting one. Therefore, they laughed and mocked it. But, gradually, when groups of people came to Islam and the unbelievers felt threatened, they stood firmly and step by step they intensified their enmity. The verse above depicts the first stage of their enmity against the Muslims; the one that gradually changed into several bloody battles in later stages.

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Since the believers were mostly from among the poor people who had not possessed high ranks in their society or a great deal of money, the unbelievers regarded them as lowly and counted their faith unworthy, and, consequently, mocked them and their belief.

"*While they had not been sent as guardians over them!* "

With what right and according to what rationale do they find fault with the believers?

The rich and the arrogant, from the sect of Noah, told him: "*...We see (in) you nothing but a man like ourselves; nor do we see that any follow you but the lowliest*", (**Sura Hūd. 27, No. 11, verse 27**).

And he answered : "*...Nor yet do I say, of those whom your eyes*

*despise that Allah will not grant them (all) that is good: Allah knoweth best: what is in their soul...*" (**Sura Hūd, No. 11, verse 31**).

This is, in fact, an answer to those arrogant braggarts saying that it is none of their business what type of people the believers are. They should notice the message of *Allah* in the invitation of the Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*) to Islam.

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But, in the ***Hereafter*** the tables will be turned as in the next verse:

"***So, on this Day (of Judgement) the Believers will laugh at the Unbelievers.***"

It is because the ***Day of Judgement*** is a day that, according to Divine Justice, everyone will receive the results, of his own deeds, which he incurred in this world. All these tricks and falsehoods will be shown for what they really are, and that is why the Believers will laugh at the Unbelievers; which is, itself, a kind of painful punishment for the arrogant ones.

Some narrations, from the Prophet ***(p.b.u.h.),*** denote that on that Day a door in ***Heaven*** will be opened to the disbelievers and they, thinking that they are free from the fire of ***Hell***, go toward it. But, when they reach the door, it will be closed quickly. This will occur several times and the Believers, watching them from Heaven, will laugh.

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"***(Sitting) on thrones (of dignity) they will command a sight (of all things)***".

What will they be looking at? They will be looking at the immense Blessings of Eternity; at the Great Gifts therein; at His endless Grace; at the Dignity and Respect together with the calmness they have in ***Heaven***, and at the painful chastisement that the obstinate arrogant Unbelievers are faced with in ***Hell.***

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Finally, in an interrogative sentence, the last verse questions:

"***Have not the Unbelievers been recompensed for what they used to do ?***"

This statement, whether coming from the side of *Allah*, or of the angels, or from the Believers, is a type of sarcasm leveled at the imaginations and the claims of the arrogant Unbelievers, who expected

to receive rewards and prizes from *Allah* for their vices. To confront the vanity of these wrong imaginations, it says:

*"Have not the Unbelievers been recompensed for what they used to do? "*

Some of the commentators have counted this sentence as a separate and independent sentence while some others have considered it as dependant on the previous verse; i.e. the ***Righteous*** are sitting on their decorated thrones and looking to see whether the wicked have received the merit of their wrong actions. Verily, they should get their reward from Satan. Can the cursed Satan give them any reward?

The term /θuwibb/ is based on /θaub/ which basically means '***to return to the original state***', or '***to return to a place to which one has come before***', and / θawāb / is said for a recompense or the reward which is given to a person for his deeds, since it is the result of his deeds which returns to him. This term is used for the compensation of a good action and an evil one both, but more specially and more frequently for good ones. Therefore, the above mentioned verse denotes a sort of sarcasm to the ***Unbelievers***, and it must be so, because they used to mock both the ***Believers*** and the ***Messages*** of *Allah*, so, on ***That Day***, they should be paid back for their mockeries which they committed in this world.

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***Supplication:***

***O Lord! Save all of us from pride, ignorance, and vanity.***

***O Lord! Grant us the spirit of justice, truthfulness, and humility.***

***O Lord! Set our Record in ' 'Illiyīn' and take it out from 'Sijjīn'.***

The End

Sura Mutaffifīn

(Defrauders)

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

# Sura Inshiqaq (The Rending Asunder)

## *No. 84 (25 Verses)*

(After reading certain verses of Qur'an it is an obligation to do prostration after their recitation, so we have chosen this mark ❊ to help you find these verses within the text.)

### *Contents of the Sura:*

This Sura, like many other Suras of the last part of the holy Qur'an, talks about the ***Resurrection***. First, there are some references to the awful events of the time when this world ends and the New World begins. Then, it speaks about ***The Resurrection*** and ***The Reckonings*** of the good-doers and evildoers and their ultimate end. Further, it refers to the deeds and beliefs of the disbelievers which bring about *Allah's* punishment on them. And then, after some oaths, it touches on the different stages Man goes through during and after his life. Finally, it returns to speaking about the good and evil actions of Man and his rewards or punishments on ***That Day***.

### *The Virtue in Studying This Sura:*

There is a tradition from the Prophet ***(p.b.u.h.)*** which says: "***He who studies Sura Inshiqāq Allah will make him safe from being given his Record from behind his back (on the Reckoning Day)***".

There is a narration from Imam Sādiq, written in the book 'Thawāb - al - A'māl', which says: "***He who recites those two Suras: Infitār and Inshiqāq, and considers them present before his eyes in his obligatory and optional prayers, nothing will separate him from Allah. He will be in the continuous presence of Allah and Allah will be looking over him until all of the accounts he has with others are settled.***"

# Sura Inshiqaq
## (The Rending Asunder)

*No. 84 (verses 1-9)*

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

١ اِذَاالسَّمَآءُ انْشَقَّتْ ○

٢ وَاَذِنَتْ لِرَبِّهَا وَ حُقَّتْ ○

٣ وَ اِذَاالْاَرْضُ مُـدَّتْ ○

٤ وَاَلْقَتْ مَا فِيهَا وَ تَخَلَّتْ ○

٥ وَ اَذِنَتْ لِرَبِّهَا وَ حُقَّتْ ○

٦ يٰٓاَيُّهَاالْاِنْسَانُ اِنَّكَ كَادِحٌ اِلٰى رَبِّـكَ كَدْحاً فَمُلٰاقِيهِ ○

٧ فَاَمَّا مَـنْ اُوتِىَ كِتَابَهُ بِيَمِينِهِ ○

٨ فَسَوْفَ يُحَاسَبُ حِسَاباً يَسِيراً ○

٩ وَيَنْقَلِبُ اِلٰى اَهْلِهِ مَسْرُوراً ○

**In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful**

*1. "When the Sky is rent asunder,"*

*2. "And obeys its Lord, and it must;"*

*3. "And when the Earth is flattened out,"*

*4. "And casts forth what is within it and becomes empty,"*

*5. "And obeys its Lord, and it must;"*

*6. "O man! Surely you are ever toiling on towards your Lord; painfully toiling, until you meet Him."*

*7. "Then he who is given his Record in his right hand,"*

*8. "Soon he will be reckoned with by an easy reckoning,"*

*9. "And he will return unto his people in joy."*

### *Commentary:*

***A Hard Struggle Towards Absolute Perfection:***

As it was said in the description of the content of the Sura, at the beginning of the Sura it talks about the awful and amazing events which will happen at the end of this world. It says: ***"When the Sky is rent asunder,"*** (and the celestial bodies burst asunder and lose their order and regularity).

An idea similar to that is mentioned at the beginning of **Sura Infitār, No. 82, verses 1-2** where it says: ***"When the Sky is cleft asunder," "When the planets are scattered"*** , and this is an announcement for the destruction and the end to this material world.

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***"And obeys its Lord, and it must;"***

No one might suppose that the Sky, which is great and seemingly vast and limitless, would have the least resistance against this divine order. It, like an obedient person, resigns to the Order, perfectly.

The term /aðinat/ is derived from /uðun/ ***'ear'*** meaning ***'to listen to'***; and here, metaphorically means ***'to obey the Command'***.

The term /huqqat/ is based on /haqq/ and means ***'fit, need, or deserve'*** .

How can the earth and the sky not obey when they are created things and they must necessarily obey their Creator since their very nature as a created being requires that they must hearken to the call of their Creator, and they not only did so from the beginning as **Sura Fussilat, No. 41 verse 11** says: ***"...they said 'we do come (together), in willing obedience' "***, but they also obey *Allah's* command for their dissolution.

Some have also said that the purpose of the term /huqqat/ is that the fear of the ***Hereafter*** is so terrible that the Sky deserves to be cleft asunder.

However, the first commentary seems more fitting.

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Then, it points to the state of the earth and says:

***"And when the Earth is flattened out".***

Many verses in the Qur'an say that mountains will be uprooted,

totally, and left as plains; smooth and level, and the earth will be flattened and large enough for all human beings to gather on. This is said in **Sura 'Tā-hā', No. 20, verses 105-107**: *"They ask thee concerning the Mountains: say, 'My Lord will uproot them and scatter them as dust;'"* *"He will leave them as plains smooth and level;"* *"Nothing crooked or curved will thou see in their place"*.

And the Great Judgment, where all human beings, from the beginning to the end, are gathered, needs such a large and level place.

Some commentators have said that on *That Day Allah* spreads the present earth, much larger than it is now, in order to make room enough for all of His creatures.

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*"And casts forth what is within it and becomes empty."*

The consensus of scholars say that the meaning of the verse is that the Earth will suddenly cast forth what it has within its soil, of dead bodies, who will then have a re-birth for the eternal life. This is the same idea set forth in **Sura Zilzāl, No.99, verse 2**: *"And the Earth throws up her burdens (from within)."* And, it is also similar to what is said in **Sura Nāzi'āt, No. 79, verses 13-14**: *"But it shall be only a single blast,"* *"When, behold, they shall be in the awakened state."*

Some commentators have said that besides human beings, mines and treasures, hidden within the soil, will erupt.

It is also probable that the verse refers to the idea that molten lava, within the earth, will be carried out by violent and terrible earthquakes which then covers the surface of the earth and makes it level. Thereafter, the interior of the earth will be empty and quiet.

All of the above three commentaries, combined, are also possible.

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*"And obeys its Lord, and it must."*

These events, which correlate with the submission of all creatures, indicate the destruction of the universe: the earth, the sky, treasures which, all-in-all, come to an end and give way to a new stage of life; the Eternal life.

Moreover, as signs, they make it clear that *Allah's* domain is over everything, especially the *Resurrection*.

Verily, Man will be faced with the result of his actions; good or evil, when these events occur.

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Then, addressing mankind, it tells them of the fate on their path:

***"O man! Surely you are ever toiling on towards your Lord;***
***painfully toiling, until you meet Him."***

The term /kadh/ means ' ***toil*** ' and ' ***labour*** ' , or ' ***striving hard*** '.

In the commentaries of ' Kashshāf ' and ' Fakhr-i-Rāzī ' and also 'Rūh-al-Amīn' the term has been meant as ' ***a scratch on the skin of the body*** '. That is why it is used for the struggles which affect Man's spirit.

This verse points to a great principle throughout everyone's life. It says that this life is perpetually saturated with pain and labour, when it is for obtaining the articles of this world, and even more so for the eternal happiness and for gaining *Allah's* favour. This is the nature of this world. Even those who live a very good life are not at all free from pain and labour.

The term ' ***meet*** ' used in this verse refers to either the meeting at the Gathering Place, in the ***Hereafter,*** before the throne of *Allah's* Absolute Judgment for all, or meeting His Reward or Punishment, or meeting Him through one's intuition, and shows that the pain and the labour will continue until ***That Day***. When it finishes, one meets his Lord after death, with one's pure and good deeds, of course.

Man, in the sense of all human beings, and stressing on the humanity of the human, is addressed by the verse, and this tells us the fact that *Allah* has created the required faculties in Man to pave the way from the beginning to the end.

The emphasis on the term ' ***Lord*** ' points to another fact. That is, that this troublesome effort of life is a part of the Divine program towards Man's development.

Verily, we are travellers, from nothing, who have entered the realm of existence and are going to the Abode of Love with the hope that we shall meet Him.

This idea is mentioned in some other verses, of the Qur'an. For

example, in **Sura Najm, No. 53, verse 42** it says: "*That to thy Lord is the final Goal*". And also in **Sura Fātir, No. 35, verse 18** it says: "*...and the destination (of all) is to Allah.*"

And there are also other verses, in the Qur'an, all of which denote that the permanent process of development for all creatures is unto Almighty *Allah*.

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But, here, men are divided into two groups, as it says:

"*Then he who is given his Record in his right hand,*"

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"*Soon he will be reckoned with by an easy reckoning,*"

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"*And he will return unto his people in joy.*"

This group of people are those who act and use their gifts in the same way that *Allah* has guided Man to do. All their efforts and endeavours are for the sake of *Allah* and their entire movements are always unto *Allah*. There, they are given their Records in their right hand and that shows the purity of their deeds, the correctness of their faith, and their deliverance in the *Hereafter* that will bring them joy and happiness; an honour to all human beings gathered there.

When they stand in front of the Scale (for reckoning), that which is very just, *Allah* reckons with them easily: He forgives them of their faults and, because of their strong faith and good acts, changes their sins into good deeds.

Some commentators have said that the meaning of '*an easy reckoning*' is an account which is taken easily and not with accuracy and severity; in which sins are forgiven and good deeds are given reward.

There is a tradition from the Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*) which says: "*Allah takes the account easy of he who has three characteristics and lets him go into Heaven with His Mercy.*" "*What are they?*" they asked, and he answered, "*To be generous to the person who deprived you; to join to the one who ceased from you; and to forgive those who hurt you*".

This matter is also understood from some narrations that accuracy and severity with reckoning, in the Hereafter, depends on one's wisdom and knowledge, as a narration from Imam Bāqir (*p.b.u.h.*) says: "*In the*

***Hereafter and on the Day of Judgment, Allah, the Almighty, will exact a detailed account from His servants, in exact proportion to the reason with which He has endowed them in the worldly life***". [1]

The opinions for the commentary about /ahl/ are divided. Some commentators have said that the objective meaning is '***one's believing wife and children***', that only believers will obtain in Heaven. The very thing, that a person meets his beloved members, in Heaven, and is with them there, is a great blessing in itself.

Some other commentators have said that it means '***the angels belonging to the believing servants in Heaven***'. Still others have meant /ahl/ as the believing persons whom were loved by one in this life and they were on the same level with him.

All of them, combined, are also probable.

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## *Explanations:*

### *A Surprising Narration!*

It is narrated from Amir-al-Mo'mineen Ali (***p.b.u.h.***) who commented about the verse: "***When the Sky is rent asunder***" and said: "***The skies will separate from the galaxy***".

This narration is meaningful and noteworthy. It is considered among the miracles of science. It opens a secret which none of the scientists of that time knew. But, nowadays astronomers, with the help of their observations through their great and powerful telescopes, have proven that the universe is a collection of galaxies, each of which is in the form of many systems and stars, and that is why they are called '***star cities***'. The Milky Way, a known galaxy, is visible at night and is a great collection of these very systems and stars. One side of it is so far from us that its stars seem to be only a massive white cloud, but actually it is a group of lights close together, indeed.

The other side of it, which is nearer to us, is formed by visible stars; the same stars which we see in the sky at night. Then, our solar system is a part of this galaxy; the Milky Way.

According to the above narration, Hazrat Ali (***p.b.u.h.***) says that at the threshold of the ***Hereafter*** the stars that we primarily see in the sky

1 Nūr-uth-Thaqalayn, vol. 5, p. 537.

will separate from the galaxy and lose their order completely.

In those days, no one knew that the stars we see in the sky were really parts of the Milky Way, but only he whose heart was connected to the unseen world and whose knowledge was derived from the divine source could know.

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***This Life is Full of Pain and Labour.***

The term /kādiḥ/, used in the verse, denotes that every effort and endeavour is with pain and trouble. The verse addresses all individuals and states the fact that the nature of life, in this world at any stage, is full of toil and misery, bodily, mentally or both, combined, and no one is an exception.

There is a very meaningful tradition narrated from Imam Ali-ibn-al-Hosain (*p.b.u.h.*) which says: ***"There is no ease and comfort in the world for the people of this world. It is found only in Heaven and for the people of Heaven. Toil and labour are in this world and for the people of this world. Each one of them who gets a share of it, has doubled the greed. And those who have more property and things of this world are more needful, because they need other people and some tools to keep and protect the things that they have accumulated. Then, there is no comfort in the wealth of this world."***

So Imam *(p.b.u.h.)* adds at the end that: ***"Nay, the friends of Allah never bear pain in this world for this world, but they bear it in this world for the Next World."*** [1]

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1 Khisāl-i-Sadūq, vol. 1, Chapter: 'This World and the Next World'

# Sura Inshiqaq
## (The Rending Asunder)

*No.84 (verses 10-15)*

١٠ وَاَمَّا مَنْ اُوتِىَ كِتٰبَهٗ وَرَآءَ ظَهْرِهٖ ○
١١ فَسَوْفَ يَدْعُوا ثُبُوراً ○
١٢ وَيَصْلٰى سَعِيراً ○
١٣ اِنَّهٗ كَانَ فِى اَهْلِهٖ مَسْرُوراً ○
١٤ اِنَّهٗ ظَنَّ اَنْ لَنْ يَحُورَ ○
١٥ بَلٰى اِنَّ رَبَّهٗ كَانَ بِهٖ بَصِيراً ○

*10. "But he who is given his Record behind his back,"*

*11. "Soon he will cry for Perdition,"*

*12. "And enter a Blazing Fire."*

*13. "Truly, he was (erstwhile ) joyful among his people!"*

*14. "Truly he thought that he would never return (to his Lord)!"*

*15. "Yes indeed! Surely his Lord was (ever) watchful of him"*

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### Commentary:

***Those Who Hold Their Record Behind Their Back!***

In contrast to the aforementioned verses, which were about those who are given their Record in their right hand, these verses are about the unbelievers and how they are given their Records. At first, it says:

***"But he who is given his Record behind his back,"***
***"Soon he will cry for Perdition,"***
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***"And enter a Blazing Fire."***

The commentators have delivered different ideas about this verse which says ***'They are given their Records behind their back'*** and those verses which say ***'Their Records are given to their left hand'.***

Some commentators have said that their right hand is tied to their neck with chains so, that is why their Records are given to their left hand from their back and it is a sign of degradation and shame.

Some others have said that their hands are not free; they are tied behind their back like those of captives and, thus, they can only receive their Records in their left hand behind their back.

Then, still others have said that by noting **Sura Nisā, No.4, verse 47** which says: **"...*before We alter faces then turn them on their back...*"**, it can be understood that the faces of this group of wicked ones have been turned to their back and they have to read their Records themselves; the Records are given to their left hand behind their back.

It is more agreeable to say that the doers of good take their Record happily in their right hand and call, with pride and boasting to others in the *Hereafter: "Ah here! Read ye my Record!"* , (**Sura Hāqqa, No. 69, verse 19**). But, when the wicked are given their Record in their left hand, they will keep it behind their back shamefully in order for it not to be seen by others, but unfortunately it is of no use, because nothing is hidden there.

They cry for perdition, but it will be in vain and they will receive the command: *"And enter a Blazing Fire"* ; that is, they will arrive at the blazing fire of *Hell.*

Then, the cause of this awful case is described and it says:

***"Truly, he was (erstwhile ) joyful among his people!"***

It was a joy of pride, and the pride originated from neglect and being forgetful of *Allah*. His self-complacence and self-conceit, in his lower life, will now give way to weeping and misery.

It is clear that joy or happiness is not naturally blamed or forbidden, but a believer should be hopeful and happy of *Allah's* Grace, and be always rejoicing and good tempered with others when interacting with them. That joy is blameworthy which makes people forgetful of *Allah*, and entangles them only in their lusts.

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***"Truly he thought that he would never return (to his Lord)!"***.

In fact, the true source of his misery and corrupted idea was his denial of the ***Resurrection,*** that which made him proud and exaltant and, thus, he became drunk with lusts and far from the Reality; *Allah,* in so far as he mocked the Mission of the prophets, and when he went to his people he was happy with this mockery. This very idea is mentioned in **Sura Mutaffifin, No.83, verse 31** : ***"And when they returned to their people they returned jesting ,"*** and also in the story of the wealthy Qārūn who was doubtful of Allah, some of his people told him ***"...Exult not, for Allah loveth not those who exult (in riches)"*** **(Sura Qasas, No. 28, verse 76)**.

The term / lanyaḥūr / ***' he would never return '*** is based on /haur/ which originally means ***' go to and fro '*** whether in deed or in thought. The term /miḥwar/ ***' axis '***, / muḥāwarah/ ***' answers for answers, debate '***, /ḥiwār/ ***' a loud voice in dialogue '***, /taḥayyur/ ***' astonishment '***, and /ḥawāriyūn/ ***' companions of Jesus '*** are from the same root.

But, on the whole, this word which has been used in this verse means ***' return '*** and ***' resurrection '***.

Meanwhile, this verse shows that the lack of belief in the ***Resurrection*** is the origin of carelessness, pride, and corruption.

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In the last verse of this portion of the verses, for the negation of their false belief, it says:

***"Yes indeed! Surely his Lord was (ever) watchful of him" ,***

and recorded all of Man's acts, totally, and kept the Record for the coming Reckoning Day.

The idea, in this verse, is an evidence for the ***Resurrection,*** as verse 6 was: ***"O man! Surely you are ever toiling on towards your Lord; painfully toiling, until you meet Him"***. Both of them emphasize on the term '***Lord***', because the process of Man's development towards his Lord can never end with his death. The final goal is beyond the only life in this world.

*Allah's* watchfulness over Man's actions and the record of the deeds are not done in vain. They are certainly primary to the final Judgment and, consequently, to the Reward and the punishment.

# Sura Inshiqaq
## (The Rending Asunder)

*No. 84 (Verses 16-25)*

١٦ فَلَآ أُقْسِمُ بِالشَّفَقِ ○
١٧ وَاللَّيْلِ وَمَا وَسَقَ ○
١٨ وَالْقَمَرِ إِذَا اتَّسَقَ ○
١٩ لَتَرْكَبُنَّ طَبَقًا عَنْ طَبَقٍ ○
٢٠ فَمَا لَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ○
٢١ وَإِذَا قُرِئَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقُرْآنُ لَا يَسْجُدُونَ ○ ۞
٢٢ بَلِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يُكَذِّبُونَ ○
٢٣ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يُوعُونَ ○
٢٤ فَبَشِّرْهُمْ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ○
٢٥ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَهُمْ أَجْرٌ غَيْرُ مَمْنُونٍ ○

*16. "But nay! I swear by the glow of the sunset ,"*

*17. "And by the night and that which it gathers together (in one herd)".*

*18. "And the moon when it grows full,"*

*19. "That you shall most certainly enter one stage after another."*

*20. "What then is the matter with them that they do not believe ? "*

*21. "And when the Qur'an is recited to them they do not fall prostrate." ۞*

*22. "Nay, those who disbelieve reject (it)."*

*23. "And Allah knows best what they keep secret (in their breasts)."*

*24. "So announce to them a painful punishment,"*

*25. "Except those who believe and work righteous deeds: for them is a reward unending."*

**Commentary:**

*You Are Continuously Changing.*

After the description of Man's development, stage by stage, unto his Lord that we had discussed in the former verses, we will see a conformation of the same fact, with more details, in the following verses. It says:

*"But nay! I swear by the glow of the sunset,"*

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*"And by the night and that which it gathers together (in one herd)".*

❁ ❁ ❁ ❁

*"And the moon when it grows full,"*

❁ ❁ ❁ ❁

*"That you shall most certainly enter one stage after another."*

The word /lā/ in the term /fa-lā-uqsimu/ is expletive and is used for emphasis, here.

The term /šafaq/, here, as Rāqib cites in Mufradāt, means '*redness*' of the sky after sunset which mixes with the darkness of nightfall.

Fakhr - i - Rāzī believes that the term /šafaq/ originally means '*thinness*' , and therefore, a very thin dress is called /šafaq/ and /šafaqat/ is used in the case of one having a '*thin*' heart. (But, Rāqib's statement seems to be more appropriate).

In any case, *Allah* swears by it to make everyone think about this beautiful natural phenomenon, because '*sunset*' announces a deep revelation in the world, that is, the day ends and the night begins, and also, it is the time of the sunset prayer; '*Maġrib*'.

To swear by the night is for the reason that night is a hiding place for secrets and mysteries.

The term /wasaq/, conveying the meaning of '*to gather together (in one herd)*', points to one of the great secrects of the night. At nightfall all the wandering flocks and herds come home. The men that had scattered abroad, for their livelihood, return home to rest and sleep. The night collects them in their homes. This idea is also carried in **Sura Mo'min, No. 40, verse 61** when it says: *"It is Allah who has made the Night for you, that you may rest therein...".*

The moon and its glorious silver light, especially when it is full at

night, is one of *Allah's* signs and that is why He swears by it.

It is interesting to note that these four parts point to the cases and varieties that continually occur in the created world: the sun sets, its redness appears in the sky, living creatures rush to their home, and the moon rises in full. It should be noted that on the night before the fourteenth day of the month, the moon rises from the beginning of the night, by which these oaths are said, and that is a basis for the verse: "***That you shall most certainly enter one stage after another***" , which illustrates the different states in the life of Man.

There are various commentaries for this sentence. Some of them are as follows:

1. Man travels and ascends, stage by stage, towards the Absolute Perfection. He strives hard; first in this world, then in the partition and then in ***Resurrection***, with the different states that they have.

2. Man has different stages of development, from the time he is in the sperm form, until death. They are considered about thirty seven stages by some people.

3. Man bears various opposites in his life: health and sickness, sadness and happiness, hardship and ease, war and peace.

4. Man will face many different hard situations in the ***Hereafter*** until he receives the consequence of his reckoning; ***Heaven*** or ***Hell***.

5. In ancient times people had many varieties of pleasant and unpleasant adventures; or that the unbelieving people among the Muslim community displayed various denials and rejections of Islam. (This idea is said to be narrated from Imam Sādiq ***(p.b.u.h.)***.

All the above commentaries are possible, of course, and the verse may refer to all of them together.

In any event, the occurrence of these states to Man and the lack of constancy in his position, on the one hand, is an evidence to the fact that he is '***a created thing***' and necessarily has a Creator, because every changeable thing is a creature and all creatures have a Creator; and on the other hand, it is an evidence to the lack of immortality for this world; also it is a sign for Man's constant movement and development toward his Lord, to the ***Resurrection***; as was mentioned in verse 6: "***O man! Surely you are ever toiling on towards your Lord; painfully toiling, until you meet Him.***"

Then, as a general consequence it inquires:

***"What then is the matter with them that they do not believe? "***

How can they ignore the immense gifts and benefits they have from *Allah* ? They have clear evidences and signs for theism, theology and ***Resurrection***, both in outer nature like day and night, sun and moon, light and darkness, sunrise and sunset with its redness; and inner nature from the mother's womb in the form of sperm; to other stages one after another until death, but they do not believe. Why do they not accept *Allah's* grace instead of disputing about it?

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Then it turns from the creation to the revelation and says:

***"And when the Qur'an is recited to them they do not fall prostrate."*** ✳

The Holy Qur'an is so bright and clear that it is a good evidence for itself and that its content is from the Divine source.

' ***Prostrate*** ', here, means ' ***humble gratitude to Allah*** ', and ' ***to fall prostrate*** ' which is the act of putting the forehead on the ground for the prayer, is one of the examples of this general sense. Perhaps for the same reason, as it is narrated, when the Prophet ***(p.b.u.h.)*** recited these verses he fell prostrate.

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***"Nay, those who disbelieve reject (it)."***

The verb form used in the Arabic text, which is usually applied in a continuous case, shows their constant rejection. That constancy was not because of the revelation being inadequate, but it was based on their blind immitation of their father's behaviour and following their own interests and their lusts.

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***"And Allah knows best what they keep secret (in their breasts). "***

*Allah* is aware of their thoughts and aims, and, also, of the motives causing those constant rejections. Then, whatever more they keep secret, finally He will punish them.

The term /yū'ūn/ is derived from /wi'ā'/ ***'container'***. The very word is used in a statement narrated from Hazrat Ali ***(p.b.u.h.)*** in

Nahj-ul-Balāqa which says: *"Verily these hearts are containers. The best of them is that which has a better ability to preserve its contents and a bigger capacity to hold more".*

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*"So give them tiding of a painful punishment ".*

The term /baššir/ is usually used for ' *announcing good news* ' but, sometimes, it is used ironically. The believers are informed of the immense blessings of Heaven while blame is put on the unbelievers and causes them to be regretful and begrudging.

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In the last verse of this Sura, the fate of those good-doers from among the believers is again mentioned as an exception where it says:

*"Except those who believe and work righteous deeds: for them is a reward unending."*

The term / mamnūn / is derived from / mann / which means both '*cease*' and '*decline*' and also '*indebtedness*' . The word / manūn/ '*death*' is, also, based on it. All these senses may be understood from the term, in this verse, because, inspite of the blessings in this human world, which are diminishable and ever changing and often mixed with undesired consequences or indebtedness given by this person or that person, the blessings of that spiritual world are followed by no indebtedness, declention or undesired consequences.

This exception is apparently joined to the earlier descriptions, about the unbelievers in the former verses, in order to give a way to the disbelievers and to say that certainly that painful punishment will be removed from those who repent and believe and do good and they will be given a Reward that will never fail.

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***Explanation:***

The late ' Tabarsī ' in 'Majma'-al-Bayān' has rendered the last verses of this Sura to mean '*free-will*' , since it is not praiseworthy for *Allah,* the Wisest, to blame those who do not fall prostrate and believe, when they are forced to. And, when it says: *"What then is the matter with them that they do not believe?" , "And when the Qur'an is recited to them they do not fall prostrate",* ❊ is a clear evidence for '*free-will*' . Again,

blame for leaving the prostration is a reason for the fact that the disbelievers should not only follow the primary Principles of religion, but, also should perform the secondary precepts of religion, as well.

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***Supplication:***

***O Lord! Take our reckoning easy on the Day when all attend at Your Judgment.***
***O Lord! Help us to go the Right Path when all human beings are ever toiling on towards You until they meet You.***
***O Lord! We have obeyed Your Message, the Holy Qur'an, bestow on us the grace to act accordingly.***

The End

Sura Inshiqāq

(The Rending Asunder)

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

# Sura Buruj (The Constellations)

*No. 85 (22 Verses)*

***Contents of the Sura:***

The early Muslim believers of Mecca lived in turmoil especially at the beginning period of Islam. They were always faced with torture; bodily and spiritually, by the pagan Arabs who forced them to leave their Faith. Some of them, the weak ones, succumbed, but, the stonger ones resisted.

This is a Meccan Sura whose main objective seems to be the spiritual strengthening of the believers against that process, and encouraging them to persevere.

Concerning this point, it tells the story of '***the makers of the pit of fire***', those who dug some ditches in which they burnt people for their Faith. They threatened them and burnt them, but the true believers did not loose their Faith.

In another section of the Sura, the pagans are threatened with the blazing fire of ***Hell*** for the persecution of *Allah's* votaries, while the believers are given good news about the gardens of Bliss.

Then, to attract their attention to past generations, it illustrates the story of Pharaoh, the people of Thamūd and some other arrogant sects. They lived in such great authority, in the past, that the pagans of Mecca were naught in comparison with them, but they could not stand for *Allah's* command and perished. Besides, these examples are for soothing the heart of the Prophet ***(p.b.u.h.)*** and of the believers.

Finally, the Sura ends with an explanation about the greatness and the extraordinary importance of the Holy Qur'an.

On the whole, this is a Sura of resistant perseverance, and patience from the side of the believers against the persecutions of the enemies, amongst which the promise of *Allah's* victory is found.

The name of the Sura is taken from the oath which occurred in the beginning verse of the Sura.

***The Virtue in Studying this Sura:***

There is a tradition from the Prophet ***(p.b.u.h.)*** for the virtue of this Sura which says: ***"Allah will give reward for the good-deeds ten times the number of all people gathered in 'Friday Prayer' and all people gathered on the day of 'Arafah (the ninth day of Zilhajj), to the person who studies this Sura. Its recitation saves Man from fears."***

These rewards fit in with the content of the Sura and it is obvious when we consider that: one of the commentaries for the verse: ***"By the Witness and the Witnessed"*** is '***Friday***' and '***'Arafah Day***', and that the Sura denotes to the severe perseverance of the early believers against the enemies' persecutions. By the way, it also confirms that these rewards belong to those who study the Sura, then contemplate on it and act accordingly.

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# Sura Buruj
## (The Constellations)

*No. 85 (verses 1-9)*

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ
١ وَالسَّمَاءِ ذَاتِ الْبُرُوجِ ○
٢ وَالْيَوْمِ الْمَوْعُودِ ○
٣ وَشَاهِدٍ وَمَشْهُودٍ ○
٤ قُتِلَ اَصْحٰابُ الْاُخْدُودِ ○
٥ اَلنَّارِ ذَاتِ الْوَقُودِ ○
٦ اِذْ هُمْ عَلَيْهَا قُعُودٌ ○
٧ وَهُمْ عَلٰى مَا يَفْعَلُونَ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ شُهُودٌ ○
٨ وَمَا نَقَمُوا مِنْهُمْ اِلَّا اَنْ يُؤْمِنُوا بِاللّٰهِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَمِيدِ ○
٩ اَلَّذِى لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمٰوَاتِ وَالْاَرْضِ
وَاللّٰهُ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَىْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ○

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# Sura Buruj
## (The Constellations)

*No. 85 (verses 1-9)*

**In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful**

*1. "By the Sky full of constellations,"*

*2. "By the promised Day (of Judgment),"*

*3. "By the Witness and the Witnessed."*

*4. "Cursed were the makers of the pit (of fire),"*

*5. "Of the fuel-fed fire (kept burning),"*

*6. "When they sat by it,"*

*7. "And they were witnesses of what they did to the believers."*

*8. "They were vengeful towards them for no other reason than that they believed in Allah, the Almighty, the Praiseworthy,"*

*9. "Him, to Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth. And Allah is Witness over everything."*

### Commentary:

*The Believers and the Pyres:*

We know that the believers of Mecca were in terrible trouble, at the beginning, and their enemies did whatever they could to torture them. As it was mentioned earlier, the objective of the revelation of the Sura is to warn these persecutors so that they may consider the destiny of the past tyranical generations and, on the other hand, it is a soothing message for the early believers of Mecca and a strengthening for their spirits. Furthermore, it is a lesson to Muslims throughout history.

*"By the Sky full of constellations".*

The term / burūj / is the plural form of / burj / which originally means '*a castle*' or '*a tower*'. Some have rendered it to anything that is apparent, manifest or conspicuous, high or elevated; hence /burj/ is

applied to a certain kind of structure. Also, /burj/ is used to define an angle of a fortress, or of a surrounding wall of a city, which is more conspicuous; and sometimes a fortress, itself, is called /burj/.

The celestial bodies are either the bright stars of the sky, or the '*constellations*', that is, '*a number of fixed stars arbitrarily considered as a group*,' usually named after some mythological beings that they supposedly resemble in outline, or the broad belt of the constellations marking the twelve Signs of the Zodiac. Each makes the solar path through the heavens, as we see it, month after month . (Indeed, the sun is rather fixed and the earth rotates round the sun, but, to us it seems to be the contrary.)

Whichever of them the oath is made to, it denotes to its greatness which, perhaps, was not completely known to Arabs at that time, but it is clear to us, today, though it seems that the meaning is '*the bright stars of the sky*'.

The holy Prophet *(p.b.u.h.)* is narrated to have said, on the commentary of the verse, that: "*It means the stars*". [1]

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"*By the promised Day (of Judgement)*"

The appointed Day that all the prophets spoke about and hundreds of verses of the Holy Qur'an warned of. The Day that "*Those of old and those of later times*". "*All will certainly be gathered together for the meeting appointed for the Day*", (**Sura Waqi'ah, No. 56, verses 49-50**), and the account of all will be made clear.

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And, in the third and fourth oaths, it says:

"*By the Witness and the Witnessed.*"

There are many commentaries given on the meaning of the terms / šāhid / '*witness*' and / mašhūd / '*witnessed*'. There are more than thirty, of which the following are the most outstanding:

1. The '*Witness*' is the Prophet *(p.b.u.h.)* as **Sura Aḥzāb, No. 33 verse 45** says: "*O Prophet! Truly We have sent you as a Witness, a Bearer of Glad Tidings and a Warner*".

1 Durr-ul-Manthūr, vol. 6, p. 331.

And the '*Witnessed*' is the Day of Judgment, as **Sura Hūd, No.11, verse 103** says: "*...that is a Day for which mankind will be gathered together: that will be a Day of Testimony*".

2. The '*Witness*', / šāhid /, is the witnesses to Man's deeds like his limbs, as mentioned in **Sura Nūr, No. 24, verse 24**: "*On the Day when their tongues, their hands, and their feet will bear witness against them as to their actions*".

And the '*Witnessed*', / mašhūd /, is people and their deeds.

3. The '*Witness*' is Friday which is witness to the community of Muslims in the great ceremony of '*Friday Prayers*'.

And the '*Witnessed*' is ' *'Arafah Day* ' when the pilgrims, of Kaaba, are the visitors on that Day (the ninth day of Zilhajj). This very commentary has been narrated from the Prophet, Imam Bāqir, and Imam Sādiq *(p.b.u.th.)*. [1]

4. The ' *Witness* ' is ' *the Feast of Sacrifice* ', and the ' *Witnessed* ' is ' *'Arafah Day* '.

A narration says that once a man came into the Mosque of the Prophet *(p.b.u.h.)*, / masjid-an-nabī /, and saw a person who was reciting traditions of the Prophet *(p.b.u.h.)*. He asked him for the commentary of this verse and the person there answered in the affirmative that /šāhid/ the '*Witness*' is Friday and / mašhūd / the '*Witnessed*' is '*the Feast of Sacrifice Day*'. He passed him and saw another person who was also reciting. then he asked him about the commentatry of the verse and he answered: / šāhid / the '*Witness*' is Friday and / mašhūd / the '*Witnessed*' is '*the Feast of Sacrifice Day*'. He continued walking, and met a young man who was very handsome and he, too, was narrating traditions from the Prophet (*p.b.u.h.)*. He asked him to tell him about the commentary of the verse and the young man answered: / šāhid / '*the Witness*' is Mohammad (*p.b.u.h.)* and / mašhūd / the '*Witnessed*' is the Day of Judgment. He added: "*Have you not heard that Allah says: 'O Prophet! Truly We have sent you as a Witness, a Bearer of Glad Tidings and a Warner', and have you not also heard that He says: 'That is a Day for which mankind will be gathered together: that will be a Day of Testimony'?* "

The writer of this incident says: "*I asked about the first person and I was answered that it was Ibn-Abbas, the answer for the second person was*

1 Majma'-al-Bayān, vol. 10, p. 466.

*'Abdillah-ibn-'Umar, and the third one was Hassan-ibn-'Ali (p.b.u.h).*" [1]

5. The '*Witness*' is '*nights and days*', and the '*Witnessed*' is '*Mankind*' whose deeds they witnessed, as it is said from Imam Zayn-al-'Ābidīn *(p.b.u.h)* in '*the morning and evening supplications*': "*This is a new day which is witness to our deeds. When we do good, it leaves us praiseworthy, and when we do evil, it leaves us scorned.*" [2]

6. The '*Witness*' is '*angels*' and the '*Witnessed*' is '*the Qur'an*'.

7. The '*Witness*' is '*the Black Stone*' and the '*Witnessed*' is '*the persons who have performed pilgrimage to Mecca*' who pass by '*the Black Stone*' and touch it.

8. The '*Witness*' is people and the '*Witnessed*' is *Allah.*

9. The '*Witness*' is the '*Muslim Community*', and the '*Witnessed*' is other nations, as **Sura Baqarah, No. 2, verse 143** says: "*... that you might be witnesses over the nations*".

10. The '*Witness*' is the Prophet of Islam *(p.b.u.h.)* and the '*Witnessed*' is other prophets, as **Sura Nisā, No. 40, verse 41** attests: "*... and We brought you as a witness against these.*"

11. Or the '*Witness*' is the holy Prophet *(p.b.u.h.)*, and the '*Witnessed*' is Amīr-al-Momineen Ali *(p.b.u.h).*

Of course, the quality of this verse, in comparison with the previous verses, demands that / šāhid / the ' *Witness* ' be the Day of Judgment, whether it be the Prophet of Islam or other prophets over their nations, the angels, Man's limbs, and the like; and / mašhūd / the '*Witnessed*' to be Mankind or their deeds.

Thus, most of the above mentioned commentaries join and come under one catagory with a broad sense.

However, the commentaries such as '*Friday*', ' *'Arafah Day* ', and '*the Feast of Sacrifice Day*' are separate from this meaning; though they are also among the witnesses of the Day of Judgment and the witnesses of man's deeds. Each of them, consisting of a large number of people even in this life, metaphorically resembles the *Resurrection.*

Taking note of the above explanation, it will be obvious that there is no contrast in the mentioned commentaries. All of them may gather in the meaning of the '*witness*' and the '*witnessed*' in a vast scope. This is

1 Nūr-uth-Thaqalayn, vol. 5, p. 543.

2 Ṣahīfah-Sajjādiyah. Sixth Supplication.

one of the signs of the importance of the ***Holy Qur'an*** whose meanings are so broad that many different commentaries can be applied to them. It is because /šāhid/ the '***Witness***' concludes any witness and /mašhūd/ the '***Witnessed***' covers anything that can be witnessed. They are mentioned in 'indifinite form', which shows their importance which was explained, definitely, in the above commentaries.

It is noteworthy that there is a delicate relation between these four parts, on the one hand, and the subjects that the oaths are for, on the other hand. The sky and its bright stars and ordered constellations are signs of regularity and account. '***The promised Day (of Judgment)***' is a definite scene of '***reckoning***' upon '***the book***'. The '***Witness***' and the '***Witnessed***' are also some means by which reckoning is precisely done. The oaths are for the persecutors to be warned that surely their evil deeds against the believers are recorded and kept for '***the promised Day of Judgement***'. And the witnesses around us, from angels, limbs of the body, the days and nights, and the like, are watchful of these deeds and they will bear witness to them on that Day.

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Then, after these oaths, it says:

***"Cursed were the makers of the pit (of fire),"***

***"Of the fuel-fed fire (kept burning),"***

***"When they sat by it,"***

***"And they were witnesses of what they did to the believers."***

The term /uxdūd/, as Rāqib says in his book 'Mufradāt' , means '***a wide and deep ditch spread on the land***', or in other words, the vast pits or trenches are called 'Okhdūd' whose plural form is / axādīd / and is basically derived from /xadd/ which means '***a deep trench in the ground, or a pit, a ditch***' or the like, dug, or excavated; and originally it is derived from the /xadd/ of Man with the sense of '***the part bordering upon the nose, on either side (on the right and on the left where the tears flow when one weeps)***'. It is used metaphorically for the ditches that appear on the surface of the earth; (and later, as an active meaning in practice).

To answer the question of who the makers of the pit of fire were, in which they burnt people for their Faith, and while they were alive; the commentators and historians have delivered some different ideas

which will be dealt with under the title of '***Explanation***' later. But, it is certain that they had excavated and prepared some deep pits of fire to make the true believers leave their Faith. When the believers persisted, the persecutors threw them into the fire and burnt them alive.

The term / waqūd / basically means a substance by which fire is made (like wood). Any fire needs something, such as wood, and the like to be burnt, but /θāt-al-waqūd/ points to the abundance of fire that they used; then naturally, the resulting fire had been an immense one; and that is why the term has been interpreted to '***burning fire***'.

Some authorities think that /waqūd/ carries two meanings: one is '***wood***' and the other is '***flame***'. But, this idea is not acceptable.

The objective point in the verse: "***When they sat by it,***" and the verse after that, is that some pagans were sitting and watching them burning not only indifferent, but, also enjoying it. That was a sign of their utmost hard-heartedness.

Some have also said that these persons were the appointed interrogators and the persecutors of the believers to cause them to leave the true religion.

Still others believe that they were two groups of people: one group was the persecutors and the other was the spectators; and since the spectators were pleased with what the persecutors did, then, this action was attributed to all of them. And, it is natural that in situations like this a group of men are always performers and some others are spectators. Besides, chiefs usually instruct while subordinates obey.

It is also said that there were some people sitting and watching the persecutions to see that the persecutors did not offend their duties and bore witness, before the king, that they had done their duties well.

The combination of these different groups, for the fulfilment of the action, does not seem improbable. Therefore, all of the above mentioned commentaries can be considered together.

At any rate, the form of the verb in the Arabic text denotes that the action was continued for a length of time.

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***"They were vengeful towards them for no other reason than that they believed in Allah, the Almighty, the Praiseworthy,"***

Verily, the believers had no fault, but that of their Faith in the True God, *Allah*. They believed in *Allah*, the Absolute Perfection, Who is Mighty, and is Worthy of all Praise. Was the belief in such a God a sin, or was the belief in powerless irrational gods?

The term / naqamū/ is derived from / naqam/ which means: '***to devour, to dislike, to reject***' by tongue, or by practice through punishment and vengeance.

Surely an action like that is done in great sin, not for the Belief in *Allah*, Who is exalted in Power and Worthy of all Praise. This makes it clear that how ignorant they were and how low their culture had been that they considered their greatest sin as their greatest pride.

This resembles the idea in **Sura A'rāf, No.5, verse 126** that sorcerers, after believing in Moses and being threatened with persecution and death by Pharaoh, told him: "***But thou dost wreak thy vengeance on us simply because we believed in the Signs of our Lord...***"

The terms /'azīz/ '***the Almighty***' and /ḥamīd/ '***the praiseworthy***' are, indeed, a reply to their inquities and a proof against them. Meanwhile, they are also a threat and warning to all the doers of persecution, throughout history, that *Allah*, the 'Almighty', and the 'Praiseworthy', keeps watch over them.

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Then, talking about two other divine qualities, it says:

"***Him to Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth. And Allah is Witness over everything.***"

Indeed, these four divine qualities: 'Almighty, (Omnipotent), Praiseworthy, ownership of the kingdom of heavens and the earth, and Omniscient' are of those that establish the propriety of servitude.

Also, it is a glad tiding to the believers that *Allah* is attentive and watchful over their perseverance and patience in defending Faith, and He sees their sacrifices and devotions. These are the facts that give them power and satisfaction.

On the other hand, they are threats and warnings for their enemies to know that *Allah* is Mighty but, He leaves them alone in order to examine them; and, at last, they will receive the painful chastisement for their evil deeds.

### *Explanations:*

***Who Were 'The Makers of The Pit of Fire' ?***

It was said before that /uxdūd/ means '***a wide and deep ditch***' and here, it means '***some great pits full of fuel-fed fire prepared by the persecutors for the purpose of burning the believers***'.

There is no agreement among the authorities, both commentators and historians, as to the time and place of the incident whether it has been a single event or the happening refers to numerous events similar to that in different parts of the world.

The most famous one is that of Zū-Nuwās, the last Himyrite king of Yemen.

Zū-Nuwās, who was by religion a Jew, named himself Yusef. The members of Himyrite followed him as Jews. Then, after a length of time, he was informed that a group of people in Najran, a zone in the north of Yemen, were still Christian. His companions compelled him to force the group to be Jewish. He moved to Najran and gathered the inhabitants of the area. Offering them the Jewish religion, he insisted that they accept it, but they did not. They refused the religion and accepted to suffer death, instead.

Zū-Nuwās ordered his men to dig a large ditch and fill it with wood, then he lit a great fire. Some of them were thrown into it and burnt alive. Some others were killed by the sword and were torn into pieces. Altogether, the number of deaths was about twenty thousand. [1]

It is cited that one of the Christians of Najran fled from the event and went to the Roman Caesar in Rome and asked him for help against Zū-Nuwās.

Caesar replied that Najran was far from his country, but, he would write a letter to the king of Abyssinia, who was a Christian and whose country was neighbouring to the man's, and would ask him to help. He wrote that letter and demanded that the Abyssinian king to take revenge on that terrible murderer. The man from Najran went to the King, Najashi, who became very saddened when he heard the story of Najran. He felt pity for the extinguishment of the light of Christianity,

1 Tafsīr-i- 'Alī-ibn-Ibrāhīm-Qummī, vol. 2, p. 414.

there, and decided to take revenge.

The Abyssinian army hastened to Yemen and defeated Zū-Nuwās' troops, killing a great many of them. Then, before long, they took Yemen and Najashi rulled it as a state of Abyssinia. [1]

Some commentators have cited that the length of the ditch was 40 cubits and its width was 12 cubits. (A cubit was equal to half a meter. Sometimes, in other places, it was used instead of /gez/ which was a measure for one meter.) Some other commentators have cited that there were seven ditches each of which had been as large as the above mentioned one.

This event has been narrated, differently, in numerous books of commentary and history including Majma' - al - Bayān by Tabarsī, Abul-Futūh Razī's Commentary, Tafsīr - i - Kabīr by Fakhr - i - Rāzī, Ruh - al - Ma'ālī by Aloosī, Qartabī's Commentary, Sīrah by Ibn-Hoshām, and many others.

As it was mentioned before, the cruel persecutors were finally punished in this world and were revenged for the murders they had committed. The punishment of blazing fire in the ***Hereafter*** is waiting for them, too.

These 'crematoriums', which were made by those Jews, are said to be probably the first ones in history. But, it is surprising that this very cruel innovation was used against the Jews, themselves, and, as it is known, many Jews were burnt in crematoriums, on Hitler's orders, in Germany; and the example of the '***Punishment of the Burning Fire***' happened to them even in this world.

In addition to this, Zū-Nuwās, the main establisher of this horrible innovation, himself, was not safe from his evil deeds.

The above lines about '***the makers of the pit of fire***' are according to popular attitudes, but there are also other narrations which say that '***the makers of the pit of fire***' were not only those in Yemen at the time of Zū-Nuwās, but in other locations and at different times. Commentators have cited up to ten narrations about them.

A narration that has been cited from Amīr - al - Mo'mineen Ali *(p.b.u.h.)* says: "***And the Magi had a 'Book' and they acted according to their Holy Book. One of their kings married with his sister and the woman***

1 Qisas-i-Qur'an, Balaqī, p. 288.

***wanted him to announce that 'marriage with ones' sister' is lawful, but his people did not accept this. So, the king had some of the believing people, who opposed his instruction, thrown into a pit of fire."*** [1]

This is about '***the makers of the pit of fire***' in Fars (Old Persia, i.e. Iran). There is a citation about '***the makers of the pit of fire***' in Shām, as well, where there lived some believing people who were burnt in a pit of fire by Antiyakhus. [2]

Some have also referred this event to the companions of Daniel, the famous prophet of the Israelites who are mentioned in the book of Daniel from the Torah, and Tha'labī has applied '***the makers of the pit of fire***', in Fars, to them. [3]

It is not improbable that '***the makers of the pit of fire***' includes all of them, although the most famous example of it is the story of Zū-Nuwās in Yemen.

***Resistance in Keeping Faith.***

There are numerous examples, in history, of people who suffered fatal persecutions for their beliefs. They agreed, eagerly, to be killed but, did not leave their Faith. History has so many stories of this kind: some of the Faithful were hanged, some were murdered by the sword, and some were burnt to death.

The story of 'Āsiya, Pharaoh's wife, is well known. She was persecuted terribly for her Faith to Moses, the son of 'Imrān, so much so that she died because of the torture.

A narration from Amīr-al-Mo'mineen Ali (***p.b.u.h.***) says: "***Allah appointed a man to prophethood from among the people of Abyssinia for them, but they refused him. They fought against him and his followers in which, finally, some of the prophet's votaries were killed and some others were captured and kept along with the prophet himself as captives. Then they prepared a ditch full of blazing fire, and called people to come beside it. They commanded that any of them who followed the same religion as theirs could go aside and those who believed in the prophet's religion and that of his votaries should throw themselves into the fire. The prophet's followers,***

1 A'lām-i-Qur'an, p. 137-138.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

***who could do nothing, bravely threw themselves into the fire. They outran each other (as if in a competition). Then, at that moment there came a woman carrying a one-month-old baby. She went to throw herself into the fire but suddenly her motherly affection stopped her. Then the little baby called her and said: 'Do not fear, Mother, throw yourself and me both. By Allah, surely this is a little thing on the path of Allah...' And this baby was one of those who spoke in the cradle."*** [1]

This story tells us that there had been another example of '***the makers of the pit of fire***' in Abyssinia.

The story of 'Ammār-Yāsir's parents and some others, like them, in addition to the story of Imam Hosain and his companions who proceeded to be killed as martyrs, are famous in Islamic history.

In our time, we ourselves, have seen or have heard many examples of young and old people who willingly wished to be martyred for the sake of their Faith and religion. Then, as a conclusion, it should be said that the existence of the Divine religions, in the past and present, depended on these devotions and martyrdoms.

1 Tafsīr-i-'Ayāshī; narrated in Al-Mīzān, vol. 20, p. 377.

# Sura Buruj
## (The Constellations)

*No. 85 (verses 10-16)*

١٠ اِنَّ الَّذِينَ فَتَنُوا الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَ الْمُؤْمِنٰاتِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَتُوبُوا فَلَهُمْ
عَذَابُ جَهَنَّمَ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابُ الْحَرِيقِ ○
١١ اِنَّ الَّذِينَ اٰمَنُو وَ عَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰاتِ لَهُمْ جَنّٰتٌ تَجْرِى مِنْ
تَحْتِهَا الْاَنْهٰارُ ذٰلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْكَبِيرُ ○
١٢ اِنَّ بَطْشَ رَبِّكَ لَشَدِيدٌ ○
١٣ اِنَّهُ هُوَ يُبْدِئُ وَ يُعِيد ○
١٤ وَ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الْوَدُودُ ○
١٥ ذُو الْعَرْشِ الْمَجِيدُ ○
١٦ فَعّٰالٌ لِمٰا يُرِيدُ ○

*10. "Surely (as for) those who persecute (or draw into temptation) believing men and believing women, yet repent not, for them is the punishment of Hell and for them is the punishment of the Burning Fire."*

*11. "Surely (as for) those who believe and do good deeds, for them are Gardens underneath which rivers flow, that is the great salvation, (the fulfilment of all desires),"*

*12. "Surely the Grip of thy Lord is severe."*

*13. "It is He Who creates (everything) from the very beginning and causes it to return,"*

*14. "And He is All-forgiving, All-loving,"*

*15. " Lord of the 'Arsh (Throne), the Glorious,"*

*16. The Doer of whatever He wills."*

**Commentary:**

***Allah's Punishment for the Persecutors.***

After describing, in the former verses, the terrible persecutions carried out by some past generations who burnt the resisting believers, in the following verses it points to the grevious punishment of *Allah*, for them, in contrast with the great rewards for the believers.

The warning is quite clear:

> ***"Surely (as for) those who persecute (or draw into temptation) believing men and believing women, yet repent not, for them is the punishment of Hell and for them is the punishment of the Burning Fire."***

The term /fatanū/ is derived from /fatn/ which originally means '***to try or prove***' (as gold in the fire to ascertain its purity), then the term is used in the sense of examination and persecution (by burning) or both. It is also used with the meaning of either punishment or leading into temptation. In this verse, it is used with the meaning of '***punishment and penalty***', similar to **Sura Zāriyāt, No. 51, verses 13-14** which say: ***"(It will be) a Day when they will be tried (and tested) over the Fire!" "Taste ye your trial! this is what ye used to ask to be hastened!"***.

The words '***yet repent not***', in the verse, shows that it is possible for the persecutors to repent, and this signifies the highest Mercy of *Allah* to the sinners. In the meantime, it warns the pagans of Mecca to leave off with the persecuting of the believers and return to the way of *Allah* before it is too late.

In principal, the Qur'an does not close the door of repentance on anyone. Then, it can be understood that the settlement of the painful punishments are for the improvement of the sinners and returning them to the way of *Allah* as a consequence.

It is noteworthy that there are two kinds of distinguishing chastisements, mentioned in the verse for the persecutors: the first is '***the punishment of Hell***', and the second is '***the punishment of the Blazing Fire***'. The case is, perhaps, for the reason that there are many kinds of punishment in Hell, one of which is '***the Blazing Fire***' and it is especially mentioned for those persecutors who burnt the believers of Mecca with fire and should be punished with *Fire* on *That Day*. But, how different these two kinds of fire are!

Some commentators have cited that '*the punishment of Hell*' is for their '*disbelieving*' and '*the punishment of the Blazing Fire*' is for their deeds of persecuting others.

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Then, paying attention to the rewards of the Righteous, it says:

***"Surely (as for) those who believe and do good deeds,***
***for them are Gardens underneath which rivers flow,***
***that is the great salvation, (the fulfilment of all desires).".***

What a great Salvation! What can be better or higher than being the Nearest to *Allah*, honourably, in the midst of the Gardens of Bliss, the Eternal blessings? But, it should be noted that the essential means of obtaining this '*great Salvation*' is '*Belief and doing good deeds*'.

The phrase / 'amal-us-sālihāt/ '*do good deeds*' denotes that a mere good action, or a few of them done temporarily, are not enough, but good deeds must be done continuously by the believers.

The term /θālika/ '*that*', in Arabic, is generally used for pointing to something or someone that is in the distance. But, here it is used to show importance and highness, then it means that their '*great Salvation*' is so important and high that imagination cannot touch it.

Then, threatening the pagans once more, it says:

***"Surely the Grip of the Lord is severe."***

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So, it emphasizes that one should not think that there is no *Hereafter* and that one does not return to life again. Nay, it says:

***"It is He Who creates (everything) from the very beginning,***
***and causes it to return".***

The term /bataša/ means '*to take or seize by force*' and since this action is the cause of punishment, then it is used in the sense of '*chastisement*'.

The term /rabbika/ '*your Lord*' is for soothing the Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*) and is an emphasis on *Allah's* support for him.

It is noteworthy to mention that there are five emphases concentrated on here:

1. The term /bataša/, meaning '*to take by force*', contains the connotation of severity.

2. A noun-phrase is usually used for emphasis.
3. The term /šadīd/ '***severe***', itself.
4. The word /inna/ '***surely***'.
5. The Arabic letter ' ل ' ( L ), used in cases like this, is also used for emphasis, here.

Therefore, the Holy Qur'an threatens them precisely about the punishment. And the sentence: "***It is He Who creates (everything) from the very beginning, and causes it to return***" is an evidence for the ***Resurrection*** which can be counted as another emphasis, added to the above ones.

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Then, five qualities of the divine attributes are mentioned. It says:

"***And He is All-forgiving, All-loving,***"

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"***Lord of the Throne, the Glorious,***"

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"***The Doer of whatever He wills.***"

The terms / qafūr / (All-forgiving), and / wadūd/ (All-loving) both are '***of the utmost amplification***' which refer to the extreme forgiveness and love of *Allah*: He is '***forgiving***' of the sins of those sinners who repent, and is '***Loving***' to the servants who are good-doers.

In fact, these divine attributes are mentioned to be added to the threats given in the former verses to illustrate the fact that the sinners can repent and be forgiven because, while *Allah* is strict in punishment, He is '***All-forgiving***' and '***All-loving***'.

The term / wadūd / has the sense of being in the subjective case, which fits the other attribute, i.e. '***All-forgiving***'.

The third attribute is /zul-'arš/ '***Lord of the Throne*** ( 'Arsh)'. And 'Arsh, which means '***Royal throne***', in such cases, refers metaphorically to power and Sovereignty. This touches on the fact that the rulership of all creatures is His , and *Allah*'s Will is, itself, the ***Word*** and the ***Deed***. There is no interval between them. No circumstance whatever can come between ***His Will*** and the execution thereof. Therefore, it is quite easy for Him to call the dead to life, again, and punish the persecutors and the oppressors.

The term / majīd/ is derived from / majd/ which means *'to excel in glory'* which is used only for *Allah* as a quality.

The association of these five Divine attributes are clear, because *Allah* is All-forgiving and All-loving under the absolute Power (Omnipotence), Graciousness and with His Will so that nothing can stop Him, no one is able to confront Him, nor does His Will fade.

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# Sura Buruj
## (The Constellations)

*No. 85 (verses 17-22)*

١٧ هَلْ اَتٰىکَ حَدِيثُ الْجُنُودِ ○
١٨ فِـرْعَـوْنَ وَ ثَمُـودَ ○
١٩ بَلِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوافِي تَكْذِيبٍ ○
٢٠ وَاللّٰهُ مِنْ وَرَآئِهِـمْ مُحِيطٌ ○
٢١ بَـلْ هُوَقُـرْاٰنٌ مَجِـيدٌ ○
٢٢ فِي لَوْحٍ مَحْفُـوظٍ ○

*17. "Has the story reached thee, of the Forces"*
*18. "Of Pharaoh and (the tribe of) Thamūd?"*
*19. "And yet the unbelievers (persist) in rejecting (the Truth)!"*
*20. "But Allah encompasses them from every point!"*
*21. "Nay! it is a glorious Qur'an,"*
*22. "(Inscribed) in a Tablet Preserved!"*

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### Commentary:

***Did you see what happened to the forces of Pharaoh and the tribe of Thamūd ?***

The previous verses were about the Absolute Power of *Allah* and His Sovereignty with some threats for the unbelieving persecutors. Then, to make it clear that these threats are not a mere statement and they are practicable, in the next verses it addresses the Prophet ***(p.b.u.h.)*** and says:

***"Has the story reached thee, of the Forces"***

These forces are some large and great troops which fought against *Allah's* prophets in the past, but all of them perished.

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Then two examples of the forces are mentioned: one of them is very ancient, and the other was not so ancient then. It says:

***"Of Pharaoh and (the tribe of) Thamūd ?"***

These peoples were those who governed throughout of the world at their time from east to west. Some of them exploited the stable stone of the mountains and built splendid houses and castles with them, so that there were no other people who could match them, in those times.

But *Allah* destroyed them all. Pharaoh was a proud monarch of a powerful kingdom, with resources and organization, material, moral, and intellectual, as good as any in the world. When he pitted himself against *Allah's* Prophet, he and his forces were destroyed through water in the Nile. The ' ***Thamūd*** ' , a very old generation, were great builders, and had a high standard of material civilization. But, they defied the law of *Allah* and perished in a dreadful earthquake and cold terrible storms, which threw them prone on the ground and burried them with their fine buildings. These two factors, water and wind, were of the main necessities of life, but they worked as the means of their inevitable destruction.

Pharaoh and Thamūd are two examples who were both very powerful; chosen from all past arrogant generations. They are selected because the Arab pagans knew their names and were partly familiar with their history.

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Then, in the next verse, it says:

*"And yet the unbelievers (persist) in rejecting (the Truth)!"*

Truth is obvious to all, but the arrogant ones do not follow the '*Way*' and do not obey the '*Right*'.

The term /bal/ '*and yet*' is used, here, for varying the matter and saying that these pagans are as if they are worse than Pharaoh and the tribe of Thamūd from the point of arrogance and rejecting the verses of Qur'an. They used all possible means to gain their goal.

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So, they should know that:

*"But Allah encompasses them from every point!"*

and they are all always within His grasp.

If *Allah* leaves them alone for a while, it is not due to inability, and if He does not punish them immediately, it is not because they are out of His reach.

The term / warā - 'i - him / '*from behind*' points to the sense that they are encompassed by the Divine forces, not only in conditions that they foresee, but from a variety of unexpected directions; and cannot escape from Justice and Penalty.

It is also probable that it points to the Knowledge of *Allah* in regard to their deeds, so much so that none of their words, behaviour, and thoughts are hidden from Him.

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Then, pointing to the vanity of their persistance in rejecting the Qur'an and their claim that it was magic, or poetry it says:

*"Nay! it is a glorious Qur'an".*

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*"(Inscribed) in a Tablet Preserved!"*

It will remain safe and unchanged from the hands of the Wicked, the Satans, and the Soothsayers.

Therefore, O Prophet *(p.b.u.h.)*! pay no attention if they call you a poet, or sorcerer, or soothsayer, or even mad. Do not be worried. Your support is Mighty and your Way is clear.

As it was mentioned before, the term / majīd / is derived from

/majd/ which means '***to excel in glory***' and is completely appropriate for the Qur'an, because its contents are broad and glorious and its meaning is vast and exalted both about Divine theology, and ethical morals, as well as religious laws.

The term /lauh/ means '***a broad tablet to write on***', while /louh/ means ' ***thirst*** ', and also: ' ***atmosphere*** '.

The verb, derived from the former, means ' ***appear and glitter*** '. But the word is used here in the sense of '***the Tablet on which the Holy Qur'an is inscribed and is preserved***'. It, of course, does not mean the ordinary tablets that we use. It is cited in a commentary from Ibn-Abbas that the length of '***the Preserved Tablet***' is as long as the distance between the sky and the earth, and its width is as long as the distance between East and West.

Hence, it seems that '***the Preserved Tablet***' is the very Knowledge of *Allah*, which encompasses all the world and is safe from any distortion and alteration.

Surely, the Qur'an originates from the endless knowledge of *Allah,* and is neither from Man's thought, nor a production from the Satans. Its content, itself, proves this fact.

This is probably the same thing that the Holy Qur'an has called /kitāb - un - mubīn / '***a Record Clear***' and sometimes ' Umm-ul-Kitāb' '***the Mother of the Book***', as **Sura Ra'd, No.13, verse 39** says: "***Allah doth blot out or confirm what He pleaseth: with Him is the Mother of the Book***".

And in **Sura An'ām, No. 6, verse 59** it says: "... ***nor anything fresh or dry (green or withered), but is (inscribed) in a Record Clear (to those who can read)***".

It should also be noted that this is the only situation in '***the Holy Qur'an***' in which the term '***the Preserved Tablet***' has occurred.

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## The End

**Sura Buruj**

**(The Constellations)**

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

# Sura Tariq (The Night)

## *No. 86 (17 Verses)*

### *Contents of the Sura:*

The subjects in this Sura are mainly divided into two groups:
1. ***Resurrection*** and 2. ***The Holy Qur'an*** and its value.

At the beginning, after some reflective oaths, it points to the existence of some divine protectors of Man.

To make manifest the possibility of ***Resurrection***, it refers to the first stage of Man's life and his creation from a sperm drop and then it draws a conclusion that the ***Creator,*** who is able to create him from such a lowly life-germ, can give life, again, to him.

In the following part, it describes the ***Resurrection*** and the uniqueness it has. Then, it offers some meaningful oaths to verify the importance of the ***Holy Qur'an***; and finally, it finishes the Sura by mentioning *Allah's* punishments for the unbelievers in order to give a warning to them.

### *The Virtue in Studying this Sura:*

There is a tradition from the Prophet ***(p.b.u.h.)*** for the virtue of this Sura which says: "***For the person who studies this Sura, Allah will reward this action ten times the number of stars in the sky.***" [1]

There is a narration from Imam Sādiq which says: "***Anyone who recites Surā Tariq in his obligatory prayers will have a high rank with Allah in the Hereafter, and will be the prophets' close friend and companion in Heaven.***" [2]

Obviously, it is the content of the Sura and acting accordingly which deserves such great rewards; not its mere recitation without following by action.

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1 Majma'-al-Bayān, vol. 10, p. 469.

2 Thawāb-ul-A'māl, according to Nūr-uth-Thaqalayn, vol. 5, p. 549.

# Sura Tariq
## (The Night)

*No. 86 (verses 1-10)*

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

١ وَالسَّمَاءِ وَالطَّارِقِ ○

٢ وَمَآ اَدْرٰىكَ مَا الطَّارِقُ ○

٣ اَلنَّجْمُ الثَّاقِبُ ○

٤ اِنْ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ لَّمَّا عَلَيْهَا حَافِظٌ ○

٥ فَلْيَنْظُرِ الْاِنْسَانُ مِمَّ خُلِقَ ○

٦ خُلِقَ مِنْ مَّآءٍ دَافِقٍ ○

٧ يَخْرُجُ مِنْ بَيْنِ الصُّلْبِ وَالتَّرَآئِبِ ○

٨ اِنَّهٗ عَلٰى رَجْعِهٖ لَقَادِرٌ ○

٩ يَوْمَ تُبْلَى السَّرَآئِرُ ○

١٠ فَمَا لَهٗ مِنْ قُوَّةٍ وَّلَا نَاصِرٍ ○

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# Sura Tariq
## (The Night)

*No. 86 (verses 1-10)*

**In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful**

*1. "By the Sky and the Night-visitant (therein)"*
*2. "And what will explain to thee what the Night-visitant is?"*
*3. "(It is) the Star of piercing brightness,"*
*4. "There is not a soul but has a protector over it."*
*5. "So let man contemplate on from what he is created!"*
*6. "He is created from a drop emitted."*
*7. "Proceeding from between the backbone and the ribs:"*
*8. "Surely He is able to bring him back (to life)!"*
*9. "On the Day when hidden things will be made manifest,"*
*10. "Man will have no strength, and no helper."*

**Commentary:**

*O Man! Consider of what you are created!*

This Sura, like many other Suras of the last part of the ***Holy Qur'an***, begins with some beautiful oaths to reflect upon which express a great fact.

*"By the Sky and the Night-visitant (therein)"*

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*"And what will explain to thee what the Night-visitant is?"*

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*"(It is) the Star of piercing brightness,"*

The term / tāriq / is derived from / tarq / '*to pound*'. And / tariq /

means '***way***' because the path is pounded by the feet of pedestrians. The term /matraqah/ '***a sledge hammer***' is used for pounding iron and materials like this.

And since the doors are closed at night when people arrive they have to pound on them to gain permission to enter, then, that which comes at night is called /tāriq/ '***the night-vistitant***'.

Amir-al-Mo'mineen Ali ***(p.b.u.h.)*** said about Ash'ath-ibn-i-Qays, the hypocrite, who came to the door of his house at night and thought that he could bribe Hazrat Ali by giving him some honey paste so that he would not judge against him, then Hazrat Ali said: "***A stranger incident than this is that a man came to us in the night with a closed flask full of honey paste.***" [1]

The Qur'an has defined 'tāriq', itself, where it says:

"***(It is) the Star of piercing brightness.***"

This Night-visitant is the brilliant star that appears very high in the sky as if it almost pierces its depth; and it is so bright that it splits the thick darkness and penetrates to the eyes.

There are many different ideas said about the kind of '***star***' mentioned in this verse. Some of them, from the point of its distance and highness, say that it may be '***Pleiades***'. Some others, from the point of its brightness, say that it is '***Saturn***', or '***Venus***', or '***a meteor***'. Some ideas say that it can be any star which glitters in the sky. But, taking note that the modifier '***piercing***' mentioned in the verse for the star, shows that the star is not any star, but it is a forceful bright star whose light passes through the darkness of night and penetrates to men's eyes.

Some narrations denote that the '***star***' is '***Saturn***' which is one of the planets of the solar system and is very bright.

This very idea is also understood from a narration of Imam Sādiq ***(p.b.u.h.)*** when he was asked by an astronomer regarding what *Allah* meant by /θāqib/ in that verse and he answered:

"***It is 'Saturn' which appears in the seventh sky. But its light passes the skies and reaches the first sky. That is why Allah has called it 'the star of piercing brightness'.***" [2]

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1 Nahj-ul-Balāqa, Sermon 224 (Arabic Version), Sermon 228 (English Version).

2 Nūr-uth-Thaqalayn, vol. 5, p. 550, Tradition 4.

It is noteworthy that Saturn is the last and the farthest star to us in the solar system which is visible simply by the naked eye. And from among the planets of the solar system, it is the sixth in distance from the sun, but if we count the moon's circle, it will be the seventh; so Imam Sādiq *(p.b.u.h.)* has considered its circle as the seventh sky in the mentioned narration.

Having some outstanding characteristics, Saturn deserves to be sworn to. It is the farthest visible star in the solar system and everything which is very high is exemplified in Arabic literature.

Saturn is notable for several concentric bright rings, which revolve around it in the plane of its equator, and are the most amazing celestial phenomena about which meteorologists have delivered various ideas. But, there are still more secrets about it that must be discovered in the future.

Some experts believe that there are ten moons around Saturn eight of which can be seen through ordinary telescopes, but, two of them can only be seen by very great and powerful telescopes.

It is clear that when the ***Holy Qur'an*** was revealed no one knew all of these facts and it is after many centuries that we know them now.

Moreover, the commentary of '***the star of piercing brightness***' may cover any bright star, and Saturn, being one of its examples, does not contradict the above idea.

'***Piercing star***' is one of the wonders of the celestial creations and may be one of the examples of the above mentioned commentary. As in **Sura Sāffāt, No. 37, verse 10** which says: " ***Except such as snatch away something by stealth, and they are pursued by a flaming fire, of piercing brightness.***"

The occasion of revelation recorded in some commentaries for the above mentioned verse, attests to this idea.

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Now let us see what these oaths are for. In the next verse it says:

"***There is not a soul but has a protector over it.***"

This protector is for recording one's acts and retaining them for ***the Reckoning Day.***

It is similar to what **Sura Infitār, No. 82, verses 10-12** carry over. They say: "***And surely there are Watchers over you ,***" "***Honourable***

***scribes:" "They know (and understand) whatever you do."***

Thus, you are not alone. Whoever you are, and wherever you are the angels of *Allah* watch you. This is a subject that can be very useful in training and improving Man, if he will only consider it.

It is noteworthy that the '***protectors***' are not defined in the verse as to who they are, and what kind of things they protect, but some other verses of the Qur'an clearly certify that they are angels and the things that they protect are '***Man's deeds***'; irrespective of good or evil.

Some probabilities denote that this protection is the protection of humans from accidents and fatal events. Verily, if *Allah* did not protect them, there would be few people who would die of natural causes, because the number of terrible accidents is so large that no one can escape from them, particularly young children.

Or, the protection may be the protection of humans against the whispers of Satans, of Jinns and of men. They are so many that if *Allah* did not protect them, no one would remain safe.

But the first commentary seems the most suitable, because the latter verses talk about ***Resurrection*** and ***Reckoning***, though all three commentaries, together, do not seem improbable.

It is praiseworthy that the aforementioned oaths have a close relationship with the protection of angels from the deeds of Man; that which the oaths are for. Since, the stars, rotating in a regular order high in the sky, are as an evidence for the existence of a definite regularity in the universe, then how can Man's deeds be left alone without a reckoning and protection from the divine protectors?

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Then, to prove the possibility of the ***Resurrection*** for those who consider it impossible, it says:

***"So let man contemplate on from what he is created!"***

And, thus, the Qur'an asks and advises all Mankind to think about that which they were created from in the beginning.

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But, immediately after that the Qur'an answers the question, itself, and says:

***"He is created from a drop emitted,".***

It is noteworthy that Saturn is the last and the farthest star to us in the solar system which is visible simply by the naked eye. And from among the planets of the solar system, it is the sixth in distance from the sun, but if we count the moon's circle, it will be the seventh; so Imam Sādiq *(p.b.u.h.)* has considered its circle as the seventh sky in the mentioned narration.

Having some outstanding characteristics, Saturn deserves to be sworn to. It is the farthest visible star in the solar system and everything which is very high is exemplified in Arabic literature.

Saturn is notable for several concentric bright rings, which revolve around it in the plane of its equator, and are the most amazing celestial phenomena about which meteorologists have delivered various ideas. But, there are still more secrets about it that must be discovered in the future.

Some experts believe that there are ten moons around Saturn eight of which can be seen through ordinary telescopes, but, two of them can only be seen by very great and powerful telescopes.

It is clear that when the *Holy Qur'an* was revealed no one knew all of these facts and it is after many centuries that we know them now.

Moreover, the commentary of '*the star of piercing brightness*' may cover any bright star, and Saturn, being one of its examples, does not contradict the above idea.

'*Piercing star*' is one of the wonders of the celestial creations and may be one of the examples of the above mentioned commentary. As in **Sura Sāffāt, No. 37, verse 10** which says: " ***Except such as snatch away something by stealth, and they are pursued by a flaming fire, of piercing brightness.***"

The occasion of revelation recorded in some commentaries for the above mentioned verse, attests to this idea.

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Now let us see what these oaths are for. In the next verse it says:

"*There is not a soul but has a protector over it.*"

This protector is for recording one's acts and retaining them for *the Reckoning Day.*

It is similar to what **Sura Infitār, No. 82, verses 10-12** carry over. They say: "*And surely there are Watchers over you ,*" "*Honourable*

*scribes:" "They know (and understand) whatever you do."*

Thus, you are not alone. Whoever you are, and wherever you are the angels of *Allah* watch you. This is a subject that can be very useful in training and improving Man, if he will only consider it.

It is noteworthy that the '*protectors*' are not defined in the verse as to who they are, and what kind of things they protect, but some other verses of the Qur'an clearly certify that they are angels and the things that they protect are '*Man's deeds*'; irrespective of good or evil.

Some probabilities denote that this protection is the protection of humans from accidents and fatal events. Verily, if *Allah* did not protect them, there would be few people who would die of natural causes, because the number of terrible accidents is so large that no one can escape from them, particularly young children.

Or, the protection may be the protection of humans against the whispers of Satans, of Jinns and of men. They are so many that if *Allah* did not protect them, no one would remain safe.

But the first commentary seems the most suitable, because the latter verses talk about ***Resurrection*** and ***Reckoning***, though all three commentaries, together, do not seem improbable.

It is praiseworthy that the aforementioned oaths have a close relationship with the protection of angels from the deeds of Man; that which the oaths are for. Since, the stars, rotating in a regular order high in the sky, are as an evidence for the existence of a definite regularity in the universe, then how can Man's deeds be left alone without a reckoning and protection from the divine protectors?

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Then, to prove the possibility of the ***Resurrection*** for those who consider it impossible, it says:

***"So let man contemplate on from what he is created!"***

And, thus, the Qur'an asks and advises all Mankind to think about that which they were created from in the beginning.

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But, immediately after that the Qur'an answers the question, itself, and says:

***"He is created from a drop emitted,".***

A gushing fluid in which his life-germ was floating.

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And in another description for '***that water pouring forth***' it says:

"***Proceeding from between the backbone and the ribs.***"

There are many different ideas for the commentary of the terms / sulb / '***backbone***' and / tarā 'ib / '***ribs***', as mentioned in this verse, where the fluid comes forth from between them. In these ideas the commentators mostly try to comment on these two terms referring to man and woman from which the egg and sperm form the foetus.

But, primarily it should be noted that the verse is speaking only about a man's fluid, because '***a drop emitted***' belongs to a man not to a woman since that of a woman does not emit and it says that the gushing fluid is so that: "***Proceeding from between the backbone and the ribs.***" Then, it is not appropriate to bring woman into this discussion. It is better to say that the Qur'an points to one of the two main parts of the life-germ, viz: a man's seed, which is understandable to all; (see also **Sura Najm, No.53, verse 46** and **Sura Qiyāmat, No. 75, verse 37**). And '***backbone***' and '***ribs***' are a man's back and front; the area between which his fluid comes from.

This is a clear commentary and the meanings of the terms simply conform to what is found in a dictionary. Meanwhile, there may be greater facts hidden in the verse that modern science has not found yet, however, scientists may uncover them in the future.

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Then, as a consequence it says that the ***Creator*** who created Man from a sperm drop:

"***Surely He is able to bring him back (to life).***".

At first it was dust. Then, after some changes, it varied to a sperm drop, and eventually it turned into Man, after passing some amazing and complicated stages, of course. So, it will not be difficult for *Allah* to bring him back to life again.

This fact is similarly mentioned in some other verses of the Qur'an such as in **Sura Hajj, No. 22, verse 5** which says: "***O mankind! if you have a doubt about the Resurrection (consider) that We created you out of dust, then out of sperm...***"

And also in **Sura Maryam, No.19, verse 67** which says: *"Does not man call to mind that We created him before, when he was nothing?"*

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In the next verse it describes *the Great Day* when it says:

*"On the Day when hidden things will be made manifest."*

The term / tublā / is based on / balavā / ' *to prove by trial or examination* ' and since the facts will be made manifest upon examination then the term is used, here, in the sense of ' *appearing* '.

The term / sarā 'ir / is the plural form of / sarīrah / ' *a secret; or inner thought, case, mood* '.

Yes, on *that Day*, the day of appearing and the day of sorting out, the secrets will be uncovered and everything from good or evil, truth or falsehood, pure or impure will become quite evident. The believing people will be proud, then, and will be honoured by additional rewards, but the unbelieving ones will be ashamed and blamed because of this clear manifestation.

What a painful time he will have who lived a life respectfully, but with hidden evils; then, everything will become obvious to all! Surely he will be completely sorry and regretful on *that Day*. This may be more painful for him than the flames of fire in *Hell*.

**Sura Raḥmān, No. 55, verse 41** also says: *"For the sinners will be known by their Marks..."*. In some other verses of the Qur'an we read that in *the Hereafter* there are some people whose faces are white and bright, but there are others that have dark and dusty faces (**Sura 'Abasa, No. 80, verses 38-41**).

Verily, similar to the Night-visitant and other stars that appear at night and everyone can see them in the sky, the protectors of Man, who record and keep his deeds, will unveil everything there, also.

It is narrated from Ma ' āth - ibn - Jabal who asked the Prophet *(p.b.u.h.)* about the interpretation of the term / sarā 'ir / '*secrets*', in this verse regarding what secrets there are by which *Allah* will examine the people in *the Hereafter* and he answered: *"Your secrets are your deeds such as prayers, fasting, religious tax, ablution, wet dream ceremonial bath, and any other obligatory acts. All of them are hidden, because if a person wills he says he has said his prayers but in fact he has not, he says he has made his ablution, but he has not, and this is the commentary of which*

*Allah says: 'On the Day when hidden things will be made manifest'*. [1]

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But, the great difficulty is that, on *that Day*:

*"Man will have no strength and no helper."*

He will have no power to hide his evils, and no one to help him to ward off *Allah's* punishment.

Many verses of the Qur'an denote that, on *the Day of Judgement*, Man will have no helper, no use of ransom, no way of returning and no chance of fleeing. The only useful means to make one safe from torments will be *pure belief* and *good deeds*.

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1 Majma'-al-Bayān, vol. 10, p. 472; and a similar meaning is found in Durr-al-Manthur, vol. 6, p. 336.

# Sura Tariq
## (The Night)

*No. 86 (verses 11-17)*

١١ وَالسَّمَآءِ ذَاتِ الرَّجْعِ ○
١٢ وَالْاَرْضِ ذَاتِ الصَّدْعِ ○
١٣ اِنَّهٗ لَقَوْلٌ فَصْلٌ ○
١٤ وَمَا هُوَ بِالْهَزْلِ ○
١٥ اِنَّهُمْ يَكِيْدُوْنَ كَيْداً ○
١٦ وَاَكِيْدُ كَيْداً ○
١٧ فَمَهِّلِ الْكَافِرِيْنَ اَمْهِلْهُمْ رُوَيْداً ○

*11. "By the rain giving heaven, (the returning rain),"*

*12. "And by the earth splitting (with plants):"*

*13. "Most surely it (the Qur'an) is a decisive word,"*

*14. "And it is not a thing for amusement."*

*15. "Surely they are plotting a scheme (against the truth),"*

*16. "And I am (also) planning a scheme (against them),"*

*17. "Therefore grant a delay to the unbelievers: give respite to them gently (for a while)."*

**Commentary:**

***We Destroy the Enemies' Plans.***

Their plots will be of no avail, and *Allah's* purpose will prevail.

To follow the previous verses which were about the ***Resurrection*** and realizing it by taking note of the creation of Man from sperm, the following verses continue the same theme, however, for further emphasis and with more evidences. It says:

***"By the rain giving heaven, (the returning rain),"***

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***"And by the earth splitting (with plants)"***

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***"Most surely it (the Qur'an) is a decisive word,"***

that you will return to life.

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***"And it is not a thing for amusement."***

The term / raj' / is based on / rujū '/ '***return***'. In the Arabic language '***rain***' is called /raj'/, because water evaporates from the earth and the seas, rises to form clouds and then once again comes back down as rain; raining intermittently.

The term /sad'/ means '***to split***' and together with what was said about /raj'/ '***rain***' it means splitting of dry, hard earth after rainfall and, also, the growth of plants.

In fact, these two verses point to dead lands which survive by life-giving rain. This is what the Qur'an has repeatedly mentioned as an evidence for the ***Resurrection***. For example, in **Sura Qāf, No. 50, verse 11** it says: ***"...And We give (new) life therewith to land that is dead: thus will be the Resurrection."***

So there is an obvious relation between these oaths and what the oaths are taken for. This is one of the wonders of the Qur'an's eloquence, that there is an interesting relationship between the oaths and what the oaths are for.

**Sura Hajj, No.22, verse 5** confirming ***the Resurrection***, refers to both evidences of Man's creation from sperm and its various stages in

the form of foetus, and giving life, again, to dead lands by sending down rain, and in this very Sura, Tāriq, it emphasizes on both of them as well.

The phrase /qaul-un-fasl/ '***a decisive word***', is a statement that definitely separates Good from Evil. A group of commentators, considering the aforementioned verses, have related the statement to ***Resurrection*** while some others believe it means '***the Holy Qur'an***' as some narrations of Ahlul-Bayt ***(p.b.u.th.)*** confirm, too.

Of course, the terms /yaum-ul-fasl / with the meaning of '***Hereafter***' is used and mentioned in several verses of the Qur'an.

It is, also, probable that the terms /qaul-un-fasl/ mean '***the verses of Qur'an***' some of which announce ***the Resurrection***. Then, both of the above commentaries can be combined.

A quotation from the Holy Prophet ***(p.b..u.h.)*** has been said to have been narrated by Hazrat Ali ***(p.b.u.h.)***, thus: " ***'There will be a sedition among you soon,' the Prophet said. I asked him what the remedy for it was, and he answered: 'Qur'an is the remedy which tells you about the past and the future and your Judgement. It is a statement that separates right from wrong. It is a serious word. It is not in vain. Allah will defeat any oppressor who leaves Qur'an. And the person who seeks divine guidance anywhere save Qur'an will be led astray by Allah'.***" [1]

Then, to console the Prophet (***p.b.u.h.***) and the believers both, on the one hand, and for threatening the enemies of Islam, on the other hand, it says:

***"Surely they are plotting a scheme (against the truth),"***

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***"And I am (also) planning a scheme (against them),"***

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***"Therefore grant a delay to the unbelievers: give respite to them gently (for a while)."***

Verily, they always plan wicked schemes to oppose you. Sometimes they mock you. Sometimes they lay siege on you, economically. Sometimes they torture the believers. Sometimes they

1 'Sahih-i-Tarmathī' and 'Sunan-i-Darami' based on the quotation of 'Ruh-al-Ma'ānī, The Commentary, vol. 3, p. 100 and 'Tafsir-i-Maraqī, vol. 30, p. 118.

tell others not to listen to the Qur'anic recitation and make noise in order to be victorious. Sometimes they call you a soothsayer, mad, etc. Sometimes they believe Islam in the morning, but they disbelieve in the evening on the same day to attract some believers to follow them. Sometimes they tell you that only the poor and miserable people believe you and follow you, then leave them until they (the unbelievers) come to you. Sometimes they ask you to accept some of their gods, at least, until they follow you. And, sometimes they plan a scheme to banish you or kill you.

In short, every moment the unbelievers can try a new plot to disperse your followers and oppress the believers, or abolish you in order to extinguish *Allah's* light.

But, they should know that *Allah* will not allow them to do so, and He has taken a decision to spread the light of Islam over the world and then the light of *Allah* cannot be extinguished with a blow from their mouths.

This bright ever-shining light will not be put out by the plots of these unregenerate men who plan; but *Allah*, too, plans.

The term /kayd/ ' ***to plot against*** ' is applied both to plotting with an evil purpose (which is used more than the other usage), and planning with a good purpose, such as **Sura Yūsef, No.12, verse 76** which says: "***...Thus did We plan for Yūsef*** (Joseph)."

The meaning of " ***the enemies' plot*** ", in this verse, is clear with the above explanation about some of the evils of the unbelievers.

There are many evil plots and wicked plans of this kind, with an evil purpose, mentioned in the Qur'an, but what is the meaning of *Allah's* plan, in this verse, of having a good purpose? Some commentators believe that ' ***granting a delay to the unbelievers*** ' which ends with their painful punishment, is its meaning. Some others think that ' ***the punishment itself*** ' carries the meaning.

It is more suitable to say that it means the same beneficence that the Prophet (***p.b.u.h.***) and the believers got from *Allah*. They, after respiting the enemies, caused them to be neglectful and rendered their efforts ineffective, then, their plans remained fruitless.

In these verses the Prophet (***p.b.u.h.***) is deliberately ordered to act toward them moderately and give respite to them and not hurry to destroy them; to let them have the final notes, to wait for a few of them

who have a little readiness to come to Islam.

It is noteworthy that, at first, it says: "***Therefore grant a delay to the unbelievers***", and then it emphasizes: "***... give respite to them gently (for a while )***". It says the same matter twice for emphasis, but in a different way and with various words so as not to be taken unpleasantly.

The term / ruwaydā / is based on / rūd / '***to try to do something gently***', but, here it means: give respite to them for a while.

Thus, in this short verse three times *Allah* orders His Prophet to act with them moderately, and this is a good example for all Muslims to be patient and careful in their affairs especially when they are faced with their powerful and dangerous enemies. They should avoid haste and doing things undesigned or at an inappropriate time.

Moreover, it is better for the Prophet ***(p.b.u.h)*** to be patient in delivering the Message of *Allah* in order to respite all those who may believe, and to complete the argument and reason for all of them.

The reason why this respite has been counted short, may be because Islam overcame its enemies in a short time and their plans did not profit them. The first failure was at the battle of Badr. Then, later their plans failed, again, in the battles of Ahzāb, Kheybar, Seffīn and so on. At the end of the Prophet's life, they were completely weak when the light of Islam spread throughout the Arabian Peninsula; and before the end of one century, it covered most parts of the world at that time.

Or, it may be that the punishment of ***the Hereafter*** is near and basically everything which is definite and sure is counted close.

However, this Sura begins with oaths to the sky and stars, and ends with threats to the unbelievers who plot and scheme against the beneficent purpose of *Allah*. There are also some nice evidences to the ***Resurrection*** in some elegant sentences about the angels, who are the protectors of Man, and for soothing the believers. These verses are not only short and meaningful, but also beautiful and decisive.

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**Supplication:**

***O Lord! The plots and schemes of the enemies are many in our time. Turn them to themselves and make their evil plans invalid.***

***O Lord! On the Day when all the secrets will be made manifest, please put us not to shame.***

***O Lord! We have no power or helper save You. Leave us to no one else, but to Yourself.***

The End

Sura Tāriq
(The Night)

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

# Sura A'la (The Most High)

## *No. 87 (19 Verses)*

### *Contents of Sura A'lā:*

This Sura is made up of two parts. In the first part, the words are directed to the Prophet ***(p.b.u.h.)*** , himself, containing some instructions regarding the praise of *Allah* and the fulfilment of his prophecy. Corresponding to that, it names seven attributes of *Allah;* the Most High.

The second part is about the humble believers, and the wretched rejecters. It expresses, concisely, the causes for their felicity and wickedness.

At the end of the Sura, it is stated that these facts (pointed out in these verses) are mentioned not only in the ***Holy Qur'an,*** but are also mentioned in the earlier Scriptures; as well as the Scriptures of Abraham and Moses.

### *The Virtue in Studying this Sura:*

There are many narrations cited on the virtue of reciting this Sura; among them is a tradition from the Prophet Mohammad ***(p.b.u.h.)*** which says: ***"Allah will reward him, who recites this Sura, the number of words, tenfold, which were revealed to Abraham, Moses and Mohammad (p.b.u.th.)*** [1]

There are several narrations which denote that whenever the Prophet (***p.b.u.h.***) or one of the twelve Imams (***p.b.u.th.***) recited Sura A'lā , they used to say / subhāna rabbī-al-a'lā / ***'Glory be to my Lord, the Most High'***. [2]

Another narration says that one of the companions of Hazrat Ali (***p.b.u.h.***) said that he prayed twenty consecutive nights behind him

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1 Nūr-uth-Thaqalayn, Commentary, vol. 5, p. 533.

2 Ibid.

(*p.b.u.h.*) and he (*p.b.u.h.*) did not recite any Sura, except **Sura A'lā**. Also, he (*p.h.u.h.*) said that if they knew what a blessing it has, every single one of them would recite the Sura ten times each day. He added that he who recites the Sura has, in essence, recited the Book and the Scriptures of Moses and Abraham. [1]

In short, as it is understood from all the narrations about it, this Sura stands out with special importance. Again, a tradition from Hazrat Ali (*p.b.u.h.*) says that Sura A'lā was beloved by the Holy Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*) [2]

Opinions are divided over this Sura as to whether it was revealed in Mecca or Medina, but the popular idea among commentators is that it was revealed in Mecca.

Al - 'Allāmah - as - Sayyid Mohammad Hosain at - Tabātabā'ī (may *Allah* have mercy on him) prefers to consider the first part of the Sura Meccan and the last part Medinan, since it contains words about prayer and alms and, according to the narrations from Ahl-ul-Bait, (*p.b.u.th.*) the words mean '***the prayer and alms on the feast of fast-breaking day***', and we know that the instruction of the fasting month, with its relevant actions, were revealed in Medina. [3]

However, it is probable that the instruction of prayer and alms, mentioned at the end of the Sura, is a general instruction and '***the prayer and alms on the feast of fast-breaking day***' are counted as its '***clear examples***'. We know that commentary on the phrase '***clear example***' is found abundantly in the narrations of Ahl-ul-Bait (*p.b.u.th.*).

Therefore, the popular idea denoting that the Sura is Meccan is not improbable, particularly because the beginning verses, of the Sura, are completely compatible with the ending verses. Then, it is not easy to say that the Sura was revealed partly in Mecca and partly in Medina. There is also a narration which says that each group of people who arrived in Medina recited this Sura to some people in Medina.

This probability; that only its beginning verses were recited and the last verses were revealed in Medina, is very improbable.

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1 Nūr-uth-Thaqalayn, Commentary, vol. 5, p. 544.

2 Majma'-al Bayān, vol. 10, p. 472.

3 Al-Mīzān, vol. 20, p. 386.

# Sura A'la
## (The Most High)

*No. 87 (verses 1-5)*

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ
١ سَبِّحِ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ الْاَعْلَىٰ ○
٢ الَّذِيْ خَلَقَ فَسَوّٰى ○
٣ وَالَّذِيْ قَدَّرَ فَهَدٰى ○
٤ وَالَّذِيْ اَخْرَجَ الْمَرْعٰى ○
٥ فَجَعَلَهٗ غُثَآءً اَحْوٰى ○

**In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful**

1. *"Praise the name of your Lord, the Most High,"*
2. *"He Who has created and fashioned (all things)"*
3. *"And He Who has determined and guided,"*
4. *"And He Who brings out the Pasturage,"*
5. *"Then makes it dried up; dust-coloured."*

### *Commentary:*

***Glorify Allah, The Most High:***

This Sura contains the essence of the Prophet's Doctrine and mission, and begins with the praise of *Allah*. The very first verse addresses the Prophet (*p.b.u.h.*) and says:

***"Praise the name of your Lord, the Most High".***

Some commentators believe that the word '***name***', here, means '***that which is named***', while some others have said that '***name***', itself, means '*Allah*'; a name, of course, which refers to '***that which is named***'.

In any event, there is not much difference between these two commentaries, when both of them mean that His name would not be mentioned among the names of idols; in the way some idol worshippers wanted to regard His name, adding it along with the names of their own idols, or by those who consider Him material or corporeal.

The term /a'lā/ '*the Most High*' points to the fact that He is High and the Most High to any other persons or things that can be thought of, or beyond any apparent idolatrous or hidden polytheism.

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Along with these two attributes, viz: '*Lord, the Cherisher*', and '*the Most High*', five more characteristics are expressed, here, all of which are about His very High Lordship. It says:

"*He Who has created and fashioned (all things)*"

The term / sawwā / is based on / taswīyah / and means '*to proportion, fashion, perfect, make level and equal*'. It has such a broad meaning which involves all the regularities of the world, containing the regulations over the stars and celestial bodies, or over the earthly creatures; particularly Mankind, from the view point of body and spirit. Some commentators have meant it to be the special fashioning of Man's eyes, hands, legs, or his body standing erect, but, in fact, it is only a limited example of the vast concept of this term.

On the whole, the regularities of the Universe; from the greatest celestial systems to the simplest matters, such as the grooves in the finger tips; which are pointed out in **Sura Qiyāmat, No. 75, verse 4:** "*Nay We are able to put together in perfect order the very tips of his fingers*", all are clear evidences of His Lordship and the affirmation of the one true *Allah*. This short statement, in itself, contains abundant meanings.

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Following the matter of creation and its fashioning, attention is paid to the subject of the laws and decrees that He has ordained for the development, and guidance of the creatures to progress, on the Way. It goes on to say:

"*And He Who has determined and guided*".

The objective point of the term / taqdīr / ; the root for /qaddara / , is the very proportioning in the whole scheme of

development towards the goal that creatures are created for.

And the objective point for the term / hidāyat /; the base of /hadā /, is ' ***the divine guidance*** ' in the form of instincts and inner creeds dominating on every creature (irrespective of their inner or outer motives.)

For instance, on the one hand, a mother's breasts and the milk therein are created for the child's nurishment and she has been gifted with strong motherly love, and on the other hand, it includes the instinct of the child moving toward its mother's breast, an instinct which is created in him. This preparation and mutual attraction, on the path to the goal, is seen in all living creatures.

In short, an alert observation upon the structure of any creature and the process it passes through in its life, makes this fact clear that there is an exact scheme in the course of development and, also, a powerful authoritative guidance supporting it and helping the program to be put into effect. This is another sign of His Lordship.

Of course, for human beings, in addition to divine guidance, there is another kind of guidance which is conveyed through revelation and by prophets and is called '***religious guidance***'. It is interesting to note that Man's religious guidance is complementary to his divine guidance, in all ways and under all circumstances.

A similar meaning is stated in **Sura Tāhā, No. 20, verses 49-50** where Moses answers Pharaoh who asks: "***...Who, then, O Moses, is the Lord of you two?***", and he replies : "***Our Lord is He Who gave to each (created) thing its form and nature, and further, gave (it) guidance.***"

Although the meaning of this statement was partly known at the time of Moses or in the days of the revelation of Qur'an , today, with the development of science and Man's knowledge about different kinds of creatures; especially living creatures and plants, it has become more clear than ever before. There are thousands and thousands of books written on the subject of / taqdīr / and ' ***the divine guidance*** ', and they confess that there are still more unexpressed facts than what have already been stated.

Then, referring to plants, particularly pastures for cattle, it says:

"***And He Who brings out the Pasturage***".

The term /axraja/ is based on /ixrāj/ which is used with a sense as

if all of these had been inside the land and *Allah* has brought them out. It is obvious that the nutrition of animals is a preparation for the nutrition of Man and, finally, the result of which eventually comes back round to human beings.

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***"Then makes it dried up; dust-coloured."***

The term / quθā' / basically means ' ***stubble, light straw, and dried plants that float over-flood waters*** ', also, the foam that appears on the surface of a boiling liquid is called /quθā'/. Hence, the word is used for everything that is waste and perishable and, in the current verse, it is used in the sense of ' ***dead, dried leaves and plants*** '.

The term / aḥwā/ is based on / ḥawaya / and / ḥuwwa/, and means '***dark green***' and '***black coloured***'.

Both of them are used in one sense, because the colour of ' ***dark green*** ' is usually close to a black colour; and the colour of dried plants gradually turns to black when they are covered over.

The choice of this meaning, even though reference is made to the divine blessings, may be for one of the following reasons:

1. These plants are symbols to tell human beings about the meaning of mortality conveyed in this world.

2. When dried plants are piled up they rot and change into compost which is useful for the growth of plants.

3. Some believe that there is a hint, in this verse, to the formation of underground coal by plants and trees which occurred over millions of years ago.

Of course, the verse can have a collective meaning consisting of all three of the above commentaries.

In any event, the '***dried up dust-coloured***' material made from '***pasture***' is both a good food for grazing animals in winter and a substance for men to burn, while also being a good fertilizer for farm lands.

In fact, the subject of '***Lord, the Most High***', is characterized, well, by the last five characteristics in these verses; the study of which makes Man familiar with His High Lordship.

# Sura A'la
## (The Most High)

*No. 87 (verses 6-13)*

٦ سَنُقْرِئُكَ فَلَا تَنْسَىٰ ○
٧ اِلَّا مَا شَآءَ اللّٰهُ اِنَّهُ يَعْلَمُ الْجَهْرَ وَمَا يَخْفَىٰ ○
٨ وَنُيَسِّرُكَ لِلْيُسْرَىٰ ○
٩ فَذَكِّرْ اِنْ نَفَعَتِ الذِّكْرَىٰ ○
١٠ سَيَذَّكَّرُ مَنْ يَخْشَىٰ ○
١١ وَيَتَجَنَّبُهَا الْاَشْقَى ○
١٢ اَلَّذِي يَصْلَى النَّارَ الْكُبْرَىٰ ○
١٣ ثُمَّ لَا يَمُوتُ فِيهَا وَلَا يَحْيَىٰ ○

*6. "We will make you recite, so you shall not forget,"*

*7. "Save what Allah wills, surely He knows the manifest and what is hidden."*

*8. "And We will ease you (your way) to a (state of) ease,"*

*9. "Therefore do mention for mentioning does profit (mankind)."*

*10. "He who fears will heed,"*

*11. "But the most reprobate will shun it,"*

*12. "Who will enter the Great Fire"*

*13. "Then he will neither die therein nor will he live."*

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**Commentary:**

***We Will Make Everything Prepared For You To Do Good:***

The contents of the former verses are about His Lordship and '***Oneness***', while in the following verses reference is about the Qur'an and the '***prophecy***' of the Prophet ***(p.b.u.h.)***.

In those former verses (No. 1-5) general guidance is given while these verses refer to the guidance of Man in particular. And finally, in the former verses the '***praise of the Lord; the Most High***' is indicated, while in the following verses the Qur'an, itself, which conveys that very praise, is specified.

***"We will make you recite, so you shall not forget".***

Therefore, ( O Mohammad! ), at the time of revelation be patient and do not make haste, you will never forget the Message. He Who descends them to you for the guidance of Mankind, Himself, will protect them and keep them fresh and pure, firmly in your mind, so that they will not be forgotten.

This idea is similar to what is mentioned in **Sura Tāhā, No. 20, verse 114** which says : "***... Be not in haste with the Qur'an before its revelation to thee is completed, but say, 'O my Lord! advance me in knowledge'*** ". Also **Sura Qiyāmat, No. 75, verses 16-17** say: "***Move not thy tongue concerning the (Qur'an) to make haste therewith***". "***It is for Us to collect it and to promulgate it***".

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Then, referring to *Allah's* bountiful providence and noting that all gifts are from Him, it goes on to say:

***"Save what Allah wills, surely He knows the manifest and what is hidden".***

The verse does not mean that the holy Prophet ***(p.b.u.h.)*** forgets something of the verses, or that his statement would be untrustworthy, it means that the memorization of them is a gift from *Allah* and, then, whenever He wills He can retrieve it from His prophet. In other words, the idea is to state the difference between *Allah's* intrinsic knowledge and the Prophet's gifted knowledge.

This verse, in fact, is similar to what is mentioned in **Sura Hūd, No. 11, verse 108** about the eternity of those who dwell in Paradise, which says: "***And those who are blessed shall be in Gardens: they will dwell***

***therein for all the time that the heavens and the earth endure, except as thy Lord willeth: a gift without break.***"

It is certain that the Blessed will never be sent out of Paradise as the last part of the verse attests to, but the expression '***except as thy Lord willeth***' denotes to the Authority and Dominion of *Allah*'s Will and that everything depends on His Will, both for the beginning of creation and its existence.

What confirms this sense is that keeping some data in mind and forgetting others is common for all human beings and cannot be a luxury that *Allah* counts as a privilege for His prophet. Hence, in this verse the objective is for Prophet (***p.b.u.h.***) to know, by heart, all the verses of Qur'an and ordiances of Islam.

Some have also said that the objective point of this exception is the verses whose content and recitation both have been abrogated.

But this commentary is completely improbable, since, basically, the existence of these kind of verses is not certain.

The sentence '***... Surely He knows the manifest and what is hidden***' is, in fact, the reason for the following phrase / sanuqri'uka/ '***We will make you recite***', remarking that *Allah*, Who knows all that is manifest and what is hidden, informs the Prophet ***(p.b.u.h.)*** about what is necessary for human beings, by means of revelation, and nothing in that connection will be left out.

It is also likely that the Prophet ***(p.b.u.h.)*** would not make haste when receiving revelation and would not be afraid of forgetting it, because *Allah* has promised him that he would not forget anything of the facts and He knows all things which are manifest or hidden.

Furthermore, one of the miracles of the Prophet ***(p.b.u.h.)*** was that he learned all the Suras, long and short, by heart, which Gabriel recited only once and he always remembered them forgetting nothing.

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Then, to console the Prophet ***(p.b.u.h.)***, it says:

"***And We will ease you (your way) to a state of ease***".

In other words, the objective is to state the fact that there are many difficulties on the way which he has in front of him: by way of receiving the revelation, preserving it and communicating his prophecy, together with its fulfilment, and also by doing good deeds; in all of which

*Allah* helps him and eases the problems for him.

This statement may refer to the content of the prophetic mission of the Prophet *(p.b.h.u.h.)* and the divine duties of the believers, viz : its content is easy to follow, his *(p.b.u.h.)* religion is an easy one for the believers to practise and there are no hard, backbreaking duties contained in it.

Therefore, the above mentioned verse has a vast meaning, though many of the commentators have limited it to only one of its dimensions.

Verily, if it were not for the help and success of *Allah* , the Prophet *(p.b.u.h.)* could never win out over those many difficulties.

The life of the Prophet, himself, was also a complete example for teaching this fact.

He was not a taskmaster in any aspect of his life: he ate any suitable food; he wore any clothes that were not repulsive; he slept sometimes in a bed and sometimes on a simple rug, or even on the sand. He was free from any formality; that is, he was friendly and informal.

After referring to revelation and *Allah's* promise for success and ease for the Prophet's affairs, his greatest duty is mentioned, thus:

***"Therefore do mention for mentioning does profit ( mankind)".***

Some have said that this means that mentioning is always useful. There are few whom it does not profit. Besides, at the least, it completes the argument and gives reasons to the umbelievers; which in, itself, is of a great benefit.

Some others believe that it means ' ***do mention whether it be useful or useless*** '. In fact, it is like what **Sura Nahl, No. 16, verse 81** says: ***"...He made you garments to protect you from heat..."*** . In this verse only '***heat***' is mentioned while '***to protect you from the cold***' is also understood.

Still other commentators say that the conditional sentence, here, has some meaning and its point is that when mentioning is useful '***do mention***' but, when it is not useful it is not necessary to do so.

It is also probable that the term /an/ is not used here for conditioning, but for emphasis. If so, the sentence means ' ***Do mention, for mentioning is useful*** '.

The first commentary, out of these four commentaries, seems to be the most appropriate.

The practical program of the Prophet *(p.b.u.h.)* verifies this fact.

He put no condition or limit on his citings and used to teach and give the warning to all.

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Next, attention is paid to the reaction of people, before giving a speech and warning, and they are divided into two groups. Note the following:

***"He who fears will heed."***

***"But the most reprobate will shun it".***

Truly, when the spirit of the fear of *Allah* or, in other words, when the truth seeking spirit, which is a stage of righteousness, does not exist in Man, he does not derive profit from the admonitions of *Allah* or the sermons of prophets. For this very reason, at the beginning of **Sura Baqarah, No. 2, verse 2** it is said about the Holy Qur'an, that:

***"In it is guidance sure, to those who fear Allah".***

Some narrations denote that Ibn-Abbās has cited that the verse ***"He who fears will heed"*** was revealed about 'Abdullah-ibn-Maktūm, the truth-seeking blind man, and some have said that the verse: ***"But the most reprobate will shun it"*** was revealed about Walīd-ibn-Muqayyarah and 'Atabata-ibn-Rabī'ah who were among the chiefs of the pagans.[1]

Some have said that the term /ašqā/ ***'the most reprobate'***, here, means those who are the enemies of Truth and they dishonour *Allah's* Message. As people are divided into three groups; in this respect: a) those who are aware and knowledgeable, b) those who hesitate and stand in doubt, c) and those who are the enemies of Truth, it is natural that the first and the second groups derive benefit from admonitions, but, for the third group the admonition is useless. The only thing that can be mentioned about them is that admonition is useful to complete the argument and as a reason for them to be warned.

By the way, it is understood from this verse that the Prophet ***(p.b.u.h.)*** proclaimed *Allah's* Message to the third group, too, but they ran away from it and did not accept it.

It is noteworthy that in these two verses ***'the most reprobate'*** contrasts with ***'he who fears Allah'*** and basically stands opposite to

1 Qartabī Commentary, vol. 10. p. 7110.

felicity. It is because the main origin of the felicity and salvation of Man is the very fear of *Allah* and perception of responsibility.

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In the next verse, the destiny of the last group is proclaimed:

***"Who will enter the Great Fire"***

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***"Then he will neither die therein nor will he live."***

That is, they neither die to be free of the fire nor can the state in which they are in be called '*life*'. They are always swinging between life and death; and this is the worse possible state to be in.

For the meaning of the phrase / an-nār-al-kubrā / '***the Great Fire***' different attitudes have been formed. Some have said that it means '***the lowest place in Hell***', / asfal - us - sāfilīn /, because they are the most reprobate among people and their penalty also should be the worse and the most painful one.

Others have said that '***the Great Fire***' is the final Penalty or Disaster in the ***Hereafter***, as contrasted with the minor penalties or disasters in this very life. A narration from Imam Sādiq ( ***p.b.u.h.***) denotes that he said: ***"Verily your simple fire here is a part out of seventy parts of the fire in Hell. It has been extinguished seventy times with water and has flamed again. If it were not so, mankind could not bear to be close to it".*** [1]

In the supplication of Kumail, Hazrat Ali ***(p.b.u.h.)***, comparing the fire of this world and that of the next world, says: ***"It is a tribulation and ordeal whose stay is short, whose subsistence is but little and whose period is but fleeting."***

1 Behār-al-Anwār, vol. 8, p. 288, Tradition No. 21.

# Sura A'la
## (The Most High)

*No. 87 (verses 6-13)*

١٤ قَدْ اَفْلَحَ مَنْ تَزَكّٰى ○
١٥ وَذَكَرَاسْمَ رَبِّهٖ فَصَلّٰى ○
١٦ بَلْ تُؤْثِرُونَ الْحَيٰوةَ الدُّنْيَا ○
١٧ وَالْاٰخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ وَّاَبْقٰى ○
١٨ اِنَّ هٰذَا لَفِى الصُّحُفِ الْاُوْلٰى ○
١٩ صُحُفِ اِبْرٰاهِيمَ وَ مُوسٰى ○

*14. "Indeed, he (alone) who has purified (himself) shall succeed",*

*15. "And remembers the name of his Lord and prays."*

*16. "Nay, you prefer the life of this world,"*

*17. "While the world to come is better and more lasting,"*

*18. "Surely this is in the earlier Scriptures,"*

*19. "The Scriptures of Abraham and Moses."*

### Commentary:

*All Divine Books Contained A Definite Law.*

The former verses point to the dreadful penalty of the enemies of Truth while the next verses touch on the salvation of the believers and also the the effective causes for this felicity. It begins :

*"Indeed, he (alone) who has purified (himself) shall succeed".*

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*"And remembers the name of his Lord and prays."*

Thus, the causes of salvation, felicity and success are counted as three: *'purification'*, *'rememberance of the Name of Allah'*, and *'prayers'*.

Various commentaries have been cited for the meaning of the term / tazkīyah/ *'purification'*.

First of all, it means *'purification of the soul from polytheism'*, in comparison with the former verses, and also that this is the most important purification.

Another meaning is *'purification of the heart from vices'* by doing righteous deeds according to the verses of felicity in the Holy Qur'an, such as the beginning verses of **Sura Mo'minūn, No.23** which says that salvation is a pledge for righteous deeds; or **Sura Shams, No. 91, verse 9** which, according to the questions of righteousness and impiety, says: *"Truly he succeeds that purifies it"*.

Also, the term means *'alms of the fast-breaking feast'* which would be paid first and, then, the special two rak'ah prayer of the day may be said, as this meaning has been cited in several narrations from Imam Sādiq (*p.b.u.h.*). [1]

The same idea is narrated from Hazrat Ali *(p.b.u.h.)* in other Muslim texts. [2]

A question may arise, here, as to is this Sura a Meccan Sura or not because there was nothing said, in Mecca, about fasting in the fasting month, alms of the fast-breaking feast, or the special two rak'ah prayer of the day. ('Īd-i-Fiṭr)

The answer to this question may be that some have said that the first part of the Sura was revealed in Mecca and the last part of it was revealed in Medina.

It is also probable that the above commentary expresses one clear example, out of many, and is conforming the verse with a vivid example of the above meaning.

Some have also said that the term / tazkīyah /, here, means *'alms-giving'*.

It is important to know that / tazkīyah / has such a vast meaning

1 Nūr-uth-Thaqalayn, vol. 5, p. 556, Traditions 19 and 20.

2 Rūh-al-Ma'ālī, vol. 30, p. 110, Kashshāf Commentary, vol. 4, p. 740.

that can involve all of the following: the purification of the soul from polytheism, purification of the heart from inquities, purification of deeds from prohibited ones and from hypocrisy, and purifying the soul and property by alms-giving in the path of *Allah*, because based on verse "***Of their goods take alms, that so thou mightest purify and sanctify them***", (**Sura Taubah, No. 9, verse 103**) alms-giving causes the soul and spirit to be purified.

Therefore, all the above commentaries can be concentrated in the broad meaning of the verse.

It is worth mentioning that in these verses, at first, purification is mentioned and, then, the Name of *Allah* and prayer are pointed out.

It is also noteworthy that '***prayer***' is mentioned secondary to the Name of *Allah*. This is for the reason that one will not stand for prayers unless he remembers *Allah* and the light of Faith has enlightened his heart. Besides, prayer is worthy and acceptable when it is said wholly with the Name of *Allah* and His remembrance. And that some have commented on '***the rememberance of Allah***' only by '***Allāh-u-akbar***' or / bism -il -lah - ir - rahmān - ir - rahīm / (In the Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful) which is said at the beginning of the prayers, are, indeed, examples of this.

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Pointing to the main cause of disobedience on the path of salvation, it says:

"***Nay, you prefer the life of this world,***"

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"***While the world to come is better and more lasting***".

And this is the very fact that is, also, stated in traditions: "***The love for this world is the prime origin of all vice***" [1]

There is no sound reason that lets man exchange the everlasting next world for this fleeting world and prefer these short low desires, which are often mingled with different kinds of pain and sorrow, to

1 This tradition, with a little difference, is narrated from Imam Sādiq, which Ali-ibn-Hosain and the prophets (p.b.u.th) shows its extreme importance (Nūr-uth-Thaqalayn, vol. 5, p. 556-557.)

those tremendous eternal blessings which are free from any unbecoming harmful vice.

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And it should not be forgotten that:

***"Surely this is in the earlier Scriptures,"***

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***"The Scriptures of Abraham and Moses."***

Opinions are divided as to what the demonstrative / hāðā / ***'this'*** points to. Some have said that it points to the last instruction about ***'purification'***, ***'prayer'***, and ***'consider the life of this world superior to the Next World'***, because these have been the most basic teachings of all the prophets and are found in all of the Divine books.

Some others believe that it denotes to the whole Sura, because the Sura begins with monotheism, continues with prophecy and ends with practised programs of religion.

In any case, this structure shows that the splendid content of this Sura, or its last verses in particular, are in the principles of all religions and among the basic teachings of all prophets; that which is a sign of greatness for the Sura and the importance of these teachings.

The term /suhuf/ is the plural form of / sahīfah / which, here, means ***'a tablet or a page on which something is written.'***

The above verses show that Abraham and Moses did, indeed, have Divine books.

A narration from Abūthar says that he asked the Prophet ***(p.b.u.h.)*** how many prophets (Nabī) there were and he answered that there were one hundred and twenty four thousand (124,000). Then he asked about the number of their messengers ( Rasūl ), and the Prophet ***(p.b.u.h.)*** answered him: ***"They were three hundred and thirteen and the rest were only prophets (Nabī)."*** He asked whether Adam was a prophet, and he ***(p.b.u.h.)*** agreed and said that *Allah* spoke to Adam and it was He Who created him, Himself. Then the Holy Prophet ***(p.b.u.h.)*** added: ***"O Abūthar, four prophets were Arabs: Hūd, Sālih, Shu'ayb, and your prophet."***

Also, Abūthar asked the Messenger of *Allah* how many books *Allah* revealed, and he replied: ***"One hundred and four books***

***were revealed; ten books to Adam, fifty books to Shīth, thirty books to Okhnūkh*** (Enoch) ***and he is the first one who wrote by pen, ten books to Abraham, and Torah to Moses, Ingeel to Jesus, Zaboor to David, and Qur'an to Mohammad, (the Prophet of Islam)".*** [1]

The words / al - suhuf - il - ūlā/ '***the earlier Scriptures***' refer to the books of Abraham and Moses that are compared with the latter books which were revealed to Jesus and the Holy Prophet of Islam (***p.b.u.th.***).

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***Explanation:***

An analysis on the tradition: '***The love of this world is the prime origin of all vice'.***

The Qur'anic calculation, in the aforementioned verses, for comparing this world with the Next World, saying: "***While the world to come is better and more lasting,***" is surely quite clear for the believing persons, but, regarding it, how does a believing person neglect his knowledge and commit sin and crimes?

The answer to the question is '***the predominance of desires on Man's entity***', whose main origin is also the love for the world. Love of this world is irrespective of the love of wealth, ambitions, sensuality (lusts), self-indulgence, vengefulness, mammonism, and the like. They may sometimes be so forceful and violent, in Man, as to cause him to set aside all his knowledge and wisdom which removes his sense of recognition and, consequently, he gives priority to this world rather than the Next World.

In Islamic traditions and narrations love of this world is repeatedly considered as the source of all sins and it is, in fact, an experienced truth that has been examined frequently in our own lives as well as in that of others.

Therefore, for eradicating sins from our lives, there is no other way but, to quell the love we have for this world.

We should know that this world is a probationary place and it is considered as a means, a passage, a bridge or as a farm through which we pass.

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1 Majma'-al-Bayān, vol. 10, p. 476.

It is impossible for a lover of this world, when he is to choose either the property of this world or attaining *Allah's* contentment, to accept the second idea.

The files of criminal persons in courts prove, clearly, the truthfulness of the above tradition.

When fights (even between brothers and friends), wars or murders are deeply examined, the hand of the love for this world is seen.

But, how can we get rid of the love of this world when we are born and raised as the children of this world; and the love of a child for its mother is a natural phenomena?

To accomplish this task, mental, cultural and ideological training is needed and, then, purification of the soul is necessary.

The most helpful thing in this process, for those who have decided to travel this path, is the contemplation on the outcome of the lovers of this world.

What did the Pharaohs finally do with that abundant wealth that they had? What happened to Qārūn whose "***Treasures were such that their very keys would have been a burden to the body of a strong man"?*** (**Sura Qasas, No. 28, verse 76**) And how much could he finally take with him from the coffers?

The present great forceful powers of our time, whose lives and authority have easily vanished and their kingdoms have changed into nothing after a single night or only over a short time, are the best examples for us to learn from.

We conclude this long and vast theme with an expressive tradition from Imam Ali-ibn-al-Hosain (***p.b.u.h.***) who was asked what act *Allah* considers the best, and he answered: ***"Next to having the knowledge and consciousness about the Messenger of Allah, no act is better than having enmity for the world"***. Then he added: ***"Because there are many paths on the road to the love of the world, and there are numerous ways of committing sin. The first thing , by which sin against Allah began, was Iblīs (Satan) when 'he refused and was haughty: he was of those who reject Faith' "***, (**Sura Baqarah, No. 2, verse 34**). ***"The second thing was 'greed' which caused Adam and Eve to leave the better when the Almighty Allah told them: 'O Adam! dwell thou and thy wife in the Garden, and eat of the bountiful things therein as (where and when)***

***you will; but approach not this tree, or you run into harm and transgression'*, (Sura Baqarah, No. 2, verse 35). *But they went to something that they did not need and (the result of) that very action remained and will be for his children until the Day of Judgement, since most things that man demands he does not need* ".** (Necessities are not often the source of sin, what is the origin of vice is vain desires and those things which are extra to the main necessities). ***"Then it was 'envy' which was the cause of sin in Adam's son who envied his brother and killed him".***

Some other forms of love of the world are:

1. lust for women,
2. coveting this world (length of life, having all wishes fulfilled),
3. love for position; (prestige, status),
4. love for comfort (no responsibility: always wanting to be merry),
5. love to be superior,
6. love of speech, and
7. love for wealth.

All these seven characteristics are found in the love of this world. The prophets and learned men, having considered this fact, say: ***"Love of this world is the prime origin of all vice."***.[1]

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1 Usūl-i-Kāfī, vol. 2, Chapter: 'Love For The World', Tradition No. 8.

**Supplication:**

***O Lord! Clear our hearts from 'the love of the world', the source of all vice.***
***O Lord! Always guide us on all routes to the path of development.***
***O Lord! You know the manifest and what is hidden, forgive us of our apparent and hidden sins with your Grace.***

The End

Sura A'lā
(The Most High)

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

# Sura Qashiyah (The Overwhelming Event)

## *No. 88 (26 Verses)*

### *Contents of Sura Qāshiyah:*

This Sura is one of the Meccan Suras which contains mainly the following three themes:

The first subject is the *'Resurrection'* and the contrast between the destinies of the Good and the Evil in the *'Hereafter'*.

The second subject is *'Monotheism'* with reference to the creation of the sky, the earth, and the mountains. Man should consider these wonderful matters as admonishments.

The third subject is *'Prophecy'* and some of the duties that the holy Prophet *(p.b.u.h.)* was required to perform. On the whole, the Sura strengthens the idea for the basis of religion and faith, as well as all Meccan Suras do.

### *The Virtue in Studying This Sura:*

As for the virtue of studying this Sura, there is a tradition from the holy Prophet *(p.b.u.h.)* that says: *"He who recites this Sura will be reckoned with an easy Reckoning by Allah."*. [1]

And another narration from Imam Sādiq *(p.b.u.h.)* says:
*"He who continues reciting this Sura in his obligatory or voluntary prayers, Allah will put him in His Grace both in this world and the Next, and will keep him safe from fire in the Hereafter."* [2]

Certainly it will be so, if the person would only think about the Sura and act accordingly.

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1 Majma'-al-Bayān, vol. 10. pg. 477.

2 Ibid.

# Sura Qashiyah
## (The Overwhelming Event)

*No. 88 (verses 1-7)*

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْم

١ هَـــلْ اَتٰيکَ حَدِيثُ الْغَاشِيَةِ ○
٢ وُجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ خَـاشِعَـةٌ ○
٣ عَامِلَةٌ نَاصِبَةٌ ○
٤ تَصْلٰى نَارًا حَامِيَةً ○
٥ تُسْقٰى مِنْ عَيْنٍ اٰنِيَةٍ ○
٦ لَيْسَ لَهُمْ طَعَامٌ اِلَّا مِنْ ضَرِيعٍ ○
٧ لَا يُسْمِنُ وَ لَا يُغْنِى مِنْ جُوعٍ ○

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

1. *"Has the story reached thee, of Qāshiyah (the Overwhelming Event that covers all)?"*
2. *"Some faces, that Day , will be down cast,"*
3. *"Labouring (hard), weary,"*
4. *"Entering into Blazing Fire,"*
5. *"They will be given to drink from a boiling hot spring,"*
6. *"No food will there be for them but of Ḍarī‘ (a bitter and thorny plant loathsome in smell)."*
7. *"Which will neither nourish nor satisfy hunger."*

### *Commentary:*

***They Are Weary, But With No Gain:***

In the first verse of this Sura we are introduced to another name for the ***Hereafter***; Qāshiyah:

***"Has the story reached thee, of Qāshiyah (the Overwhelming Event that covers all)?"***

The term '***Qāshiyah***' is based on /qišāwat/ '***to cover***' . The choice of this name for the ***Hereafter*** is for the reason that the terrible events of it will suddenly cover everything.

There are some other commentaries about the term '***Qāshiyah***', but the one mentioned above is the most suitable.

The verse apparently addresses the Prophet ***(p.b.u.h.)*** and it is he who is being questioned in order to show the importance of the Day.

Some commentators have said that all human beings may be the addressees; which seems improbable.

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Then, to explain the mood of the sinners, it says:

***"Some faces, that Day, will be down cast"***

They are full of shame and fear, because of the horrible chastisement of the Day. Since it is Man's face which mostly reflects spiritual moods, so, their faces will clearly show their complete debasement and horror.

This commentary is the most appropriate among the others.

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***"Labouring (hard), weary,"***

They gain no profit, in their lives; only weariness, from their arduous efforts and endeavours. They have neither approvable good deeds nor can they take anything of their wealth with them, nor do they leave fame among people or a good child after them. They are tired from their striving, but, in fact, they own nothing. What a suitable sentence about them: ***"Labouring (hard), weary,"***!

This commentary seems to be the most agreeable.

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Finally, those who struggle, in vain; who are weary, arrive at the blazing fire, so it says:

***"Entering into Blazing Fire,"***

The term / taslā / is based on / saly / which means '***to enter into burning fire to suffer the pain of being burnt***' .

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This will not be their only punishment. When they are thirsty:

***"They will be given to drink from a boiling hot spring,"***

The term / āniya / is the feminine form of / āni / '***boiling hot water, the temperature of which is at the highest degree***'.

A similar meaning for the hot water is noted in **Sura Kahf, No. 18, verse 29**: ***"...if they implore relief they will be granted water like melted brass that will scald their faces. How dreadful the drink! How uncomfortable a couch to recline on!"***

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In the next verse, it tells about their food when they are hungry:

***"No food will there be for them but of Ḍharī‘ (a bitter and thorny plant loathsome in smell)."***

The opinions of the commentators are divided about the meaning of / ḍharī‘/:

Some of them have said that it is a sort of plant, having large thorns and grows close to the ground. The people of Quraysh call it /šibriq/ when it is in its fresh state; and it is called / ḍharī‘ / when it is in its dry state. It is also said to be a poisonous plant which no beast will approach, because of its harmful quality.

' Khalil ', a philologist, says: / ḍharī‘ / is a green plant with a bad smell which is cast out of the sea upon the beaches".

'Ibn-Abbas' has said that "***it is a tree of fire, fit for Hell, that if it were in this world, it would burn the earth and all the things on it.***"

But there is a narration from the Prophet (***p.b.u.h.***) which says: " ***/ḍharī‘/ is something in Hell. It is like thorns, more bitter than aloes, more fetid than a putrid corpse, and more burning than fire. Allah has named the thing /ḍharī‘/*** ". [1]

1 Tafsīr-i-Qarṭabī, vol. 10. page 7119.

Other people have also said that / ḍarī' / is a hellish food, of which the condemned, in Hell, cry to *Allah* to get rid of it.

The above commentaries relate to each other and all of them may be correct for defining the meaning of the word.

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Then, again about the same food, it says:

***"Which will neither nourish nor satisfy hunger."***

It is certain that such a thing is a food that will neither give nourishment, to the body, nor in any way satisfy the burning pangs of hunger. It is a punishment for the unbelievers as **Sura Muzzammil, No. 73, verse 13** says: ***"And a food that chokes and a Penalty Grievous"***.

They prepared sweet and delicious foods of many varieties for themselves, in this world, through cruelty and the violation of people's rights: they forced the oppressed to use unedible, choking food. So, the oppressors should have a kind of food in Hell that is '*a Penalty Grievous*' for them.

As it has been mentioned several times, neither the blessings in Heaven nor the punishments in Hell can be thoroughly described for us; we prisoners of this world. In fact, these are but some allusive hints to the Reality.

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# Sura Qashiyah
## (The Overwhelming Event)

*No. 88 (verses 8-16)*

٨ وُجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ نَّاعِمَةٌ ○
٩ لِّسَعْيِهَا رَاضِيَةٌ ○
١٠ فِي جَنَّةٍ عَالِيَةٍ ○
١١ لَّا تَسْمَعُ فِيهَا لَاغِيَةً ○
١٢ فِيهَا عَيْنٌ جَارِيَةٌ ○
١٣ فِيهَا سُرُرٌ مَّرْفُوعَةٌ ○
١٤ وَأَكْوَابٌ مَّوْضُوعَةٌ ○
١٥ وَنَمَارِقُ مَصْفُوفَةٌ ○
١٦ وَزَرَابِيُّ مَبْثُوثَةٌ ○

*8. "(Other) faces that Day will be joyful,"*
*9. "Pleased with their Striving"*
*10. "In a Garden on high,"*
*11. "Where they shall hear no (word) of vanity."*
*12. "Therein is a fountain flowing,"*
*13. "Therein are thrones raised high,"*
*14. "And goblets placed (ready),"*
*15. "And Cushions set in rows,"*
*16. "And rich carpets (all) spread out."*

**Commentary:**

***A Perspective of the Blessings in Heaven:***

After the description of the sinners' status, in the Next World, and their punishments in Hell in the aforementioned verses, the following verses refer to the situation of the believers and good-doers and their heavenly blessings; to inform them about both *Allah's* Wrath and Grace; punishment and reward.

***"(Other) faces that Day will be joyful,"***

These faces contrast with the sinners' '***down cast, weary***' faces, that were described in the former verses.

The term / nā'imah / is based on / ni'mat / '***comfort and convenience of life***'. Here, it means the joyful faces which beam bright with the comfort of Bliss; as is said in **Sura Mutaffifin, No. 83, verse 24**: "***Thou wilt recognise in their faces the beaming brightness of Bliss***".

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These faces look happy, because they are:

***"Pleased with their Striving".***

They are content with the result of their hard struggle, in contrast with the sinners who are "***Labouring (hard), weary***" and gain no profit from their striving.

The doers of good, under the light of *Allah's* favour and beneficence, have gained additional rewards; sometimes tenfold, sometimes seven hundred times as much, and sometimes even more than that. And, sometimes, they may be given '***rewards without measure***' for their deeds, as **Sura Zumar, No. 39, verse 10** says: "***Those who patiently persevere will truly receive a reward without measure***".

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Then, to describe that state, it says:

***"In a Garden on high,"***

The term / 'āliyat / may refer to the height of a place that means '***they are in a high place in Heaven***' , or it refers to the highness of their rank, or both of them, but, the second commentary seems more suitable, though both of the ideas are probable.

Then, it describes Bliss from a spiritual point of view, and says:

***"Where they shall hear no (word) of vanity."***

They will hear neither hypocrisy nor enmity or conflict. They will hear nothing, there, unbecoming, foolish or vain: no word of discord, enmity, hatred; not a lie, accusation, back-biting, nor idle talk.

And what a comfortable environment is such a place where none of these inappropriate words is heard. In fact, they are the origin of many troubles, and discomforts of our life in this world. They disturb the peace of our spirit and the regularity of societies; which lights the fire of sedition.

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After the explanation about the existence of the spiritual blessing of hearing no vain word, it continues and explains a part of the material blessings of Heaven, saying:

***"Therein is a fountain flowing,"***

The word '***fountain***' is singular in its Arabic text. Similar cases occur in the Qur'an, like **Sura Zāriyāt, No.51, verse 15** which says: ***"As to the Righteous, they will be in the midst of Gardens and Springs"***, where '***spring***' is used in the plural form, then the indefinite singular form of / 'ayn / ' ***fountain*** ', in this verse, means ' ***some numerous other fountains***'.

Some commentators have said that since there is a spring in every castle, in Heaven belonging to the believers, which flows in every direction that they wish it to, without digging special canals, so, '***spring***' is mentioned in the singular form, but they are numerous, indeed, and are useful for their beauty, different wholesome sweet water, and whenever the Righteous wish to, they drink, therefrom.

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Then attention is paid to thrones and says:

***"Therein are thrones raised high".***

The term /surur/ is the plural form of /sarīr/ based on / surūr/ '***a throne***' (which is usually used in felicitous gatherings).

The thrones are raised high for the Righteous to see all of their surroundings, enjoy the beautiful breath-taking sceneries and find great pleasure in them.

Ibn-Abbas says that these high thrones are set in such a way that when the Righteous are going to sit on them they lower themselves in humility, for their owners, and then when the righteous sit down the thrones rise again.

It is probable that '*the thrones are raised high*' means that they are very precious, because it is said that they are made of gold and are decorated with topaz, pearls, and rubies.

However, both commentaries are possible.

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As they need some kind of utensil to drink the pure drink from the springs, it says:

"*And goblets placed (ready)*".

Whenever they wish, the goblets are filled from the springs and are ready, in front of them, to drink and enjoy, to their hearts content. Its pleasure is impossible for the dwellers of this world to describe.

The term/ akwāb/ is the plural form of /kūb/ which means '*either a goblet or any cup with a handle*'.

It is necessary to note that there are different names given for the containers of '*the pure drink*', in Heaven, mentioned in the holy Qur'an. Here, in this verse, as in some other verses, it is called / abāriq /, the plural form of / ibrīq / a cup with a spout and handle to pour the drink; or / ka's / '*a cup full of drink*' as **Sura Wāqi'ah, No. 56, verses 17-18** say: "*Round about them will (serve) youths of perpetual (freshness)*". "*With goblets, (shining) beakers, and cups (filled) from clear-flowing fountains*".

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It describes further details about Heaven and says:

"*And Cushions set in rows,*"

The term / namāriq/ is the plural form of /numruqah/ '*a pillow or soft pad for sitting or kneeling on, or reclining against usually for relaxing*'. And the term / masfūfah / '*set in rows*' denotes that there are numerous cushions arranged in order for some people to have a meeting in which they hear no vain talk, but the words are about the endless blessings of *Allah* and being saved from both the troubles and struggles of the physical world and the punishments of the spiritual world. It is so enjoyable and excellent that nothing can match it.

Finally, it points to the splendid carpets in Heaven and says:

*"And rich carpets (all) spread out."*

The term / zarābiyy / is the plural form of / zarībah/ which means '***piled, lush carpets of high quality that are both comfortable, with a high nap, and costly***'.

It is clear that there are also other facilities equal to what is mentioned above; which are a means of enjoyment and comfort, of which only a few examples are given, indicating that there are numerous of them in Heaven.

There are seven heavenly blessings mentioned in these verses; each of which is finer than the other.

In short, Heaven, an eternal home, is a unique place of no fear or grief, free from any toil or weariness, no vanity or untruth; completely in peace and security; joyful, with different kinds of fruits and pure drinks in attractive goblets and cups of gold placed, ready, over some bejewelled thrones of dignity raised high, with rich carpets spread out, beside the flowing springs with youths of perpetual freshness serving among good companions and chaste women.

In conclusion, there are immense blessings that one can neither describe with the limited human vocabulary of this world nor can one conceive in the imagination. All of them, and beyond what anyone can contemplate, are ready-made for the Righteous who obtain permission to enter *Allah's* Bliss because of their righteous deeds.

Besides the physical pleasures, there are the spiritual pleasures, the best of which is the meeting with *Allah*, in Heaven, while *Allah* is well pleased with them, and they also with Him.

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# Sura Qashiyah
## (The Overwhelming Event)

*No. 88 (verses 17-26)*

١٧ اَفَلَا يَنْظُرُونَ اِلَى الْاِبِلِ كَيْفَ خُلِقَتْ ○
١٨ وَاِلَى السَّمَاءِ كَيْفَ رُفِعَتْ ○
١٩ وَاِلَى الْجِبَالِ كَيْفَ نُصِبَتْ ○
٢٠ وَاِلَى الْاَرْضِ كَيْفَ سُطِحَتْ ○
٢١ فَذَكِّرْ اِنَّمَآ اَنْتَ مُذَكِّرٌ ○
٢٢ لَسْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِمُصَيْطِرٍ ○
٢٣ اِلَّا مَنْ تَوَلّٰى وَكَفَرَ ○
٢٤ فَيُعَذِّبُهُ اللّٰهُ الْعَذَابَ الْاَكْبَرَ ○
٢٥ اِنَّ اِلَيْنَآ اِيَابَهُمْ ○
٢٦ ثُمَّ اِنَّ عَلَيْنَا حِسَابَهُمْ ○

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# Sura Qashiyah
## (The Overwhelming Event)

*No. 88 (Verses 17-26)*

*17. "Do they not look at camels, how they are created?"*
*18. "And at the Sky, how it is raised high?"*
*19. "And at the mountains, how they are fixed firm?"*
*20. "And at the Earth, how it is spread out?"*
*21. "Therefore do thou give admonition, for thou art one to admonish."*
*22. "Thou art not one to manage (men's) affairs."*
*23. "But whoever turns back and disbelieves,"*
*24. "Allah will punish him with a mighty punishment."*
*25. "Surely to Us will be their Return;"*
*26. "Then surely upon Us will be the taking of their account."*

### Commentary:

***Look at the Camel; a Sign of Allah.***

In the commentary of the last verses, there was a broad discussion about Heaven and its blessings. The next verses refer to '***the knowledge of Allah***'; the necessary key that enables us to obtain those blessings. In these verses, four examples of *Allah's* signs of power, in His wonderful Creation, are mentioned. Meanwhile, they point to *Allah's* endless power which can be a solution to the question of Resurrection.

First, we are encouraged to observe camels:

***"Do they not look at camels, how they are created?"***

The first thing mentioned is a domesticated animal; the camel. But, why is the camel mentioned first and before all others? Commentators have put forth many ideas, but it is clear that in the beginning, the Arabs of Mecca were addressed; those who often dealt with camels in their everyday lives more than any other animal.

Moreover, this animal has some wonderful characteristics which

separate it from other animals, and truly he is one of the signs of *Allah*. Some of these characteristics are as follows:

1. Some of the domesticated four-footed animals are useful only for their meat, some others mostly for their milk; the rest are used only for riding or carrying loads, but the camel is used for all of them. The flesh can be eaten. The milk can be used. It can carry men, goods, and so on.

2. The camel is the strongest and the most persevering domestic animal which can carry heavy loads. It is also a wonder that when it is lieing on the ground and loaded heavily with goods, it can rise easily, in a motion, while other beasts cannot do so.

3. The camel can bear thirst for a long time (about seven to ten days), and can remain hungry for a time, also.

4. The camel can travel a long distance, every day, on impassible roads and sandy deserts where no other animal can, and that is why the Arabs call it the '***ship of the desert***'.

5. The camel can live on a diet of thorny plants, so, its food is inexpensive, and it is also a valuable asset when one wants to purchse a camel, because it is one of the least expensive beasts of burden.

6. Having this wonderful structure, the camel is par excellence for the sandy deserts where terrible storms hurt the eyes and ears, because *Allah* has created him with special eyes, ears, and nose that allow him to continue to walk through the blowing, stinging sand, and its limbs are adopted to this life, as well.

7. The camel is a very gentle animal. It is so gentle that a little child can hold the lead-rope of a string of camels and take them wherever he or she wishes.

In short, the specialities of this animal are so amazing that anyone who takes into consideration its creation realizes that the Creator of the animal; his Creator, is very great. In the case men neglect the ***Hereafter*** and think of it as of no account, they are asked, in the Qur'an, to contemplate on the camel which they can see in their everyday lives and which is full of meaning in its unique design and is of the goodness *Allah* bestows upon Man.

It is quite clear that the word '***look***' in the verse does not mean a simple look, but it means 'a careful look' with deep contemplation.

Attention is then paid to the second sign; the sky, and it says:

***"And at the sky, how it is raised high?"***

The lofty sky with its wonders: bright stars, galaxies and all other beauties that attract everyone's attention so that one, comparing himself with this great and glorious universe, which is full of order and regularity, finds himself as if he is nearly nothing before the Creator of them, the Infinite.

How wonderful these great celestial bodies are fixed on their orbits! They have no pillars, but stand firm. Stars and planets in the solar system are millions of years old, but their orbits are unchanged.

Although the creation of sky has always been a wonder, its facts seem more surprising and its glory glitters more brightly, today, than ever before under the light of recent scientific investigations and amazing explorations.

Are we not to contemplate on the Creator and the Wisdom of this great world and approach the main goal of its creation?

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Then our attention, which was previously attracted to the sky, is turned to the ground and says:

***"And at the mountains how they are fixed firm?"***

Mountains, whose underlying formations have joined to each other and have formed a shell over the earth, work like a shield against the inner shaking resulting from moulten lava and outer fluxes and refluxes produced by the gravities of the moon and the sun.

If these safe shelters and storm controllers, the mountains, were not on the ground, there would be only deserts all over the earth.

Mountains store wholesome water for both Man and green plants.

High mountains symbolize granduer and generosity as well as grace and blessings. Perhaps this is why Man can meditate and contemplate, there, better than at any other place, and perhaps it was for the same reason that the holy Prophet ***(p.b.u.h.)*** spent a lot of his time praying in 'Jabal-un-Nūr' and the cave of Hirra in the side of Mount Hirra near 'Arafāt before his appointment to prophecy.

The term / naṣabat / is based on / naṣb / which means ***'to place, fix, erect'***, and it may touch on the conditions of the creation of the

mountains, at the beginning. The science of geology considers some various factors for the formation of different kinds of mountains:

1. Mountains are formed by folds in the earth.
2. Mountains are formed by volcanos.
3. Mountains are formed by erosion.
4. Mountains are formed in the seas by sediments and the remains of animals.

Each of these ideas is noteworthy for the formation, merit, and grandeur of mountains. They are good signs of *Allah's* power for those who pay careful attention.

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Then, attention is paid to the Earth and says:

***"And at the Earth, how it is spread out?"***

Man should look at the earth and how rain washes the mountains away, continually, and spreads their dust into furrows and makes the land both level and fit for him to farm or to build houses on.

Suppose the Earth were totally covered with hills and valleys. How difficult would it be to live on? Who had made it smooth and flat for our use before we came to being? The Holy Qur'an advises us to contemplate on these facts and find the real answers.

Here, there is a question about what kind of relation there is between these four things: the camel, the sky, the mountains, and the Earth.

In his commentary, Fakhr-i-Rāzī says: ***"This is because the Qur'an was revealed in the Arabic language. Arabs often traveled here and there since they did not have enough farmlands and agricultural products for their lives. Those trips were made on camels. When they were travelling in the frightful lonely deserts, where there was no habitant to talk with and nothing to look at or to listen to, they would contemplate on: the wonderful camel, the only animal they were riding on; the sky, the only vault they could see high above them; the mountains they had on their right and left; and the Earth, their only companion when they looked down."***

***"It seems as if Allah makes them contemplate on these four things (naturally) when they are alone."*** [1]

1 Tafsīr Fakhr-i-Rāzī, vol. 31, p. 158.

If we think about Islam, not only for the people of the Arabian Desert, but also as a religion for the people of a very vast environment, the four things mentioned, in these verses, can be considered as the basis of Man's life; besides water and air, we receive our light and warmth from the sky. The Earth is a bed for the growth of different kinds of food products. The mountains are the site of quietude and the storing of water, as well as minerals. And the camel is a good example, from domesticated beasts, which humans can use.

Therefore, these four things contain both agricultural and industrial affairs and contemplating about them takes Man to the thought of their Creator and causes him to be thankful to *Allah;* this contemplation is his beginning step towards the knowledge of the one god; *Allah.*

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After this monotheistic description; it addresses the Prophet ***(p.b.u.h.)*** and says:

***"Therefore do thou give admonition, for thou art one to admonish."***

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***"Thou art not one to manage (men's) affairs."***

Verily, the creation of the sky, earth, mountains, and animals indicate that there is a plan and purpose for the creation of Man and the world. The Prophet's mission is to make people acquainted with the goal of that creation, with his admonishments and lead them to the path of development and nearness to *Allah.*

Of course, the path of development is paved when they do it willingly and without any outer forces, otherwise it is meaningless. The Prophet (***p.b.u.h.***) cannot force them to obey *Allah*, and even if he could, it would be useless.

Some have supposed that this instruction has been abrogated when the verses of the command for Holy War were revealed.

What a great mistake! The Prophet's mission for publicity of Islam and admonition began from the early days of his prophecy and

continued until the last moments of his life. It has been continuing since then; at first by his sinless successors and then by the Islamic scholars. This responsibility will never stop. The lack of obligation on the people, in accepting Islam, is also a permanent principle. However, Holy War is different. The goal is mainly to stand against transgressors and remove the hindrances from the path of true believers.

This matter is somewhat similar to that of **Sura Nisā, No. 4, verse 80** which says: *"...But if any turn away, We have not sent thee to watch over their (evil deeds)"* . It is the same in **Sura An'ām, No. 6, verse 107** and **Sura Shura, No. 42, verse 48**.

The term / musaytir/ is based on /satr/ ' *a line of a book or writing* ' and means ' *a person who arranges the lines of a book* ' or ' *one who has absolute authority over a thing or a person and writes down its manner of action, or makes him do something by force* '.

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In the next verse, as an exception, it says:

*"But whoever turns back and disbelieves,"*

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Opinions are divided about the commentary of this '*exception*' :

The first idea says that the exception is from the object of the verb /fa0akkir/ to '*give admonition*' . Accepting this, it means '*you do not need to give admonition to the enemies who reject Allah and do not take your advice*'. This is similar to what is said in **Sura Zukhruf, No. 43, verse 83**: " *So leave them to babble and play (with vanities) until they meet that Day of theirs, which they have been promised* ".

The second idea denotes that if the sentence is considered as a conditional sentence, there is something omitted in the sentence and hence the meaning is, '*Do thou give admonition, because admonishment is useful for all, unless they are enemies of Allah* '. It is similar to what is said in **Sura A'lā, No. 87, verse 9**:

"*Therefore give admonition in case the admonition profits (the hearer)*".

The third idea says that the exception is from the pronoun /'alayhim / in verse 22, then it would mean: '*Thou art not one to manage (men's) affair, except in so far as you receive authority to do so against those who reject Allah and do wrong with you.*' This commentary seems more agreeable.

The '*exception*' may be unrelated; if so, the meaning is: '***But those who turn back and reject Allah, He has authority over them, or He will punish them with a mighty punishment***'.

'***Mighty punishment***' is the punishment in the ***Hereafter*** and is compared with the punishment in the present life as it is said in **Sura Zumar, No. 39, verse 26**: " *So God gave them a taste of humiliation in the present life, but greater is the punishment of the Hereafter", ...*

It is probable that the purpose of the '***mighty punishment***' is a definite intensive punishment in ***Hell*** for some sinners in the ***Hereafter***, because the punishment of all evildoers will not be the same in ***Hell***.

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At the end of the Sura, it says with a threatening tone that:

***"Surely to Us will be their Return;"***

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***"Then surely upon Us will be the taking of their account."***

This is, in fact, a kind of consoling for the Prophet ***(p.b.u.h.)*** in order for him not to be upset about their obstinacy and to keep his responsibility in view. It is also a threat for all those who are obstinate in understanding who it is that will reckon with them.

Thus, **Sura Qāshiyah** which began by speaking about the ***Hereafter***, ends by speaking about the ***Hereafter*** also, but in between, '***monotheism***' and '***prophecy***', are discussed which is the basis of ***Resurrection***. Meanwhile, in the beginning verses, a portion of the severe punishments for the evildoers, and then a great part of the rewards of the good-doers are mentioned. By the way, people are free either to believe and follow the way or not, but they are warned that their return will certainly be to *Allah* and it is He Who will take care of their account.

Therefore, it clearly states that the Holy Prophet (***p.b.u.h.***) is sent to teach and direct people on the way and he is not responsible for people's rejections and corruptions. All prophets of *Allah* have been commissioned in like manner.

❁ ❁ ❁ ❁

**Supplication:**

***O Lord! On the Day that all human beings will return to you and upon you will be the taking of their account, bestow your Grace on us.***

***O Lord! Save us from the mighty Punishment on That Day.***

***O Lord! Your heavenly blessings, a few of which You described for us in this Sura, are very valuable and encouraging. If we do not deserve them, with Your beneficence, please bestow them on us.***

The End

Sura Qāshiyah
(The Overwhelming Event)

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## *A Presentation to Muslims*

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

قَالَ اللّٰه تَعالىٰ: " يا اَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اَطِيعُوا اللّٰه وَ اَطِيعُوا الرَّسُول وَ اُولِى الْاَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ "
سورةالنساء ۴-الآيه ۱۹

### In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

" O you who have faith! Obey *Allah*, and obey the Apostle, and those charged with authority among you..." (*Sura Nisa, No. 4, Verse 59*)
("Those charged with authority' are only the twelve sinless Imams (a.s.) and, at the time of occultation, Sources of Imitation, who are learned, pious, and just, should be referred to.)

فِى اِكْمالِ‌الدّينِ فى حَديثٍ عَنْ جابِرِبْنِ عَبْدِاللّٰهِ الْاَنْصارِىِّ قالَ: قُلْتُ: يا رَسُولَ اللّٰهِ عَرَفْنَا اللّٰهَ وَ رَسُولَهُ، فَمَنْ اُولُوالْاَمْرِ الَّذِينَ قَرَنَ اللّٰهُ طاعَتَهُمْ بِطاعَتِكَ؟ فَقالَ (ص) هُمْ خُلَفائى يا جابِرُ، وَ اَئِمَّةُ الْمُسْلِمينَ مِنْ بَعْدى اَوَّلُهُمْ عَلِىُّ‌بْنُ‌اَبى‌طالِب، ثُمَّ الْحَسَنُ وَ الْحُسَينُ، ثُمَّ عَلِىُّ بْنُ الْحُسَيْنِ، ثُمَّ مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ عَلِىِّ الْمَعْرُوفُ فِى التَّوْراةِ بِالْباقِرِ، وَسَتُدْرِكُهُ يا جابِرُ، فَاِذا لَقيتَهُ فَاَقْرِئْهُ مِنّى السَّلامَ، ثُمَّ الصّادِقُ جَعْفَرُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ، ثُمَّ مُوسَى بْنُ جَعْفَرٍ، ثُمَّ عَلِىُّ بْنُ مُوسى، ثُمَّ مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ عَلِىٍّ، ثُمَّ عَلِىُّ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ، ثُمَّ الْحَسَنُ بْنُ عَلِىٍّ ثُمَّ سَمِيّى وَ كَنِيّى حُجَّةُ اللّٰهِ فى اَرْضِهِ، وَ بَقِيَّتُهُ فى عِبادِهِ ابْنُ الْحَسَنِ‌بْنِ عَلِىٍّ، ذاكَ الَّذِى يَفْتَحُ اللّٰهُ تَعالىٰ ذِكْرُهُ عَلَى يَدَيْهِ مَشارِقَ الْاَرْضِ وَ مَغارِبَهَا

In ' Ikmāl-ud-Din ' a tradition, through ' Jābir-il-Ju'fī ', is narrated from ' Jābir-ibn-'Abdillāh ' thus: " I said: ' O Messenger of Allah, we have known Allah and His Apostle; then who is ' Ulul-Amr ', those that Allah has made their obedience the same as your obedience? ' Then, the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) said: ' O Jābir! they are, after me, my successors and the Guides of Muslims; the first of them is Ali-ibn-Abitalib; then (Imam) Hassan, and (Imam) Husain; then Ali-ibn-il-Husain; then Mohammad-ibn-Ali; known in the Turah as Bāqir, whom you will see. O Jābir! When you visit him, give my regards to him. After him, there is Sādiq,– Ja'far-ibn-Muhammad; and after him Mūsa-ibn-Ja'far; then Ali-ibn-Mūsā; then Muḥammad-ibn-Ali; then Ali-ibn-Muhammad, then Hassan-ibn-Ali; and after him (there comes) Al-Ghā'im whose name and sir-name is the same as mine. He is Allah's Authority on the Earth

and His Remainder amongst His servants. He is the son of (Imam) Hassan-ibn-Ali (al-'Askarī). This is the very personality by whose hands Allah will open the Easts and Wests of the worlds.

*(Ikmal-ud-Dīn, Vol. 1, p. 253' with nearly similar meaning, in Yanābī-'ul-Mawaddah, p. 117)*

قَالَ اللّٰهُ تَعَالىٰ: " وَ مَا يَنْطِقُ عَنِ الْهَوىٰ * إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا وَحْيٌ يُوحىٰ "

سورة النجم (٥٣) - الآية ٣ و ٤

" Nor does the Apostle speak out of desire. It is naught but revelation that is revealed "

*(Sura Najm, No. 53, verses 3,4)*

قَالَ رَسولُ اللّٰه (ص):

"إِنِّي تارِكٌ فِيكُمُ الثَّقَلَيْنِ كِتابَ اللّٰهِ وَ عِتْرَتي، كِتابُ اللّٰهِ حَبْلٌ مَمْدُودٌ مِنَ السَّماءِ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ وَ عِتْرَتي أَهْلُ بَيْتي وَ إِنَّ اللَّطيفَ الْخَبيرَ أَخْبَرَني أَنَّهُما لَنْ يَفْتَرِقا حَتّٰى يَرِدا عَلَيَّ الْحَوْضَ فَانْظُرُوا بِماذا تَخْلُفُوني

قَالَ النَّبي (ص): " وَ في حَديثٍ آخَر: "لَنْ تَضِلُّوا ما إِنْ تَمَسَّكْتُمْ بِهِما"

The Prophet (p.b.u.h.) said: " I leave behind me two weighty (very worthy and important) things: The Book of Allah (i.e. the Qur'ān), which is a stretched string from the heaven to the earth, and my progeny, my Ahlul-Bait; for verily Allah, The Merciful, The Aware, informed me that never, never, will these two get separated from each other until they meet me at the Houd of Kauthar (the Pond of Abundance). Therefore, be careful and contemplate on how you will treat them (after me) ". And, in another tradition it is added: " Never, never, shall you get astray if you attach yourselves to these TWO."

*(Ma'ānī-ul-Akhbār, p. 90, tradition 2, & Musnad Aḥmad-ibn-Ḥanbal, Vol. 3, p. 17, and other books from the Sunnite School and Shi'ah School mentioned in Ihqāq-ul-Haqq, Vol. 9, p. 309 to 375)*

Abul-Hassan-ir-Riḍā (a.s.) said:

" May the Mercy of Allah be upon the servant who Keeps alive our commandment." I asked him (a.s.) how the one could keep your commandment alive. He (a.s.) said: " He (can) learn our sciences and teach them to people. In fact, if people knew (the merits) and goodnesses of our speech, surely they would follow us."

*(Ma'ānī-ul-Akhbār, p. 180 'Uyūn-i-Akhbār-ur-Riḍā, V. 1, p. 207)*